

By Senator Gruters

23-04318-21

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Senate Resolution

A resolution expressing appreciation and gratitude to Florida State University President John Thrasher upon completion of his exceptional tenure as the 15th president of Florida State University and for his personal and professional achievements and commending him for his outstanding accomplishments and service.

WHEREAS, John Thrasher first entered Florida State University in 1961 as an undergraduate student, earning a bachelor's degree in business in 1965, and

WHEREAS, in 1966, John Thrasher joined the United States Army, serving first in Germany, where he received the Army Commendation Medal, and later in Vietnam, where he was awarded two Bronze Stars, and

WHEREAS, John Thrasher attained the rank of captain before his honorable discharge in 1970, when he returned to his alma mater to earn a law degree with honors in 1972, and

WHEREAS, John Thrasher served the people of the State of Florida as a member of the Florida House of Representatives from 1992 until 2000, where he was instrumental in the creation of the Florida State University College of Medicine, and

WHEREAS, on November 17, 1998, John Thrasher was unanimously elected Speaker of the Florida House for the 1999 through 2000 term, during which the Legislature passed the "A+ Education Plan" and the largest tax cut in the history of this state, and

WHEREAS, in 2009, John Thrasher was elected in a special election to the Florida Senate, where he served until 2014, and

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30 while serving there, he was the chair of the Rules Committee and
31 vice chair of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Higher
32 Education, and

33 WHEREAS, in November 2014, John Thrasher became Florida
34 State University's 15th president, and

35 WHEREAS, under John Thrasher's leadership, Florida State
36 University has moved from No. 43 to No. 19 in the national
37 public university rankings by *U.S. News & World Report's* "Best
38 Colleges" guidebook, and

39 WHEREAS, during John Thrasher's tenure as president,
40 Florida State University's 4-year graduation rate is first in
41 the state and among the best in the country, and the university
42 has virtually erased graduation rate gaps between the general
43 population and underserved students, and

44 WHEREAS, under John Thrasher's leadership, Florida State
45 University has retained first-year students at a record rate,
46 with 95 percent of first-time-in-college students who enrolled
47 for the Summer/Fall 2019 term returning for their sophomore
48 year, a retention rate that is well above the national average
49 of 81 percent for 4-year public institutions and places the
50 university among the top 15 in the nation, and

51 WHEREAS, during John Thrasher's tenure as president,
52 Florida State University's graduate school enrollment, a
53 hallmark of any great research university, is at an all-time
54 high, and

55 WHEREAS, enrollment in Florida State University's graduate
56 programs increased by 23 percent in Fall 2020, far surpassing
57 the university's goal of 3 percent annual growth, and

58 WHEREAS, John Thrasher has received numerous awards for his

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59 leadership and service, including recognition as the *Tallahassee*
60 *Democrat's* Person of the Year in 2015 and induction into the FSU
61 College of Business Hall of Fame in 2016 and into the Florida
62 Veterans Hall of Fame in 2017, and he is the recipient of the
63 National Association of Student Personnel Administrators' Region
64 III President's Award and the Tallahassee Urban League Legend
65 Award, and

66 WHEREAS, John Thrasher presided over a successful \$1
67 billion fundraising campaign, advanced Florida State
68 University's academic and research mission, championed diversity
69 and inclusion, and welcomed the best and brightest students in
70 the university's history, and

71 WHEREAS, John Thrasher has spent the majority of the past
72 55 years in service to the United States, his hometown of
73 Jacksonville, the State of Florida, and his alma mater, Florida
74 State University, NOW, THEREFORE,

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76 Be It Resolved by the Senate of the State of Florida:

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78 That the Florida Senate expresses its appreciation and
79 gratitude to Florida State University President John Thrasher
80 upon the completion of his exceptional tenure as the 15th
81 president of Florida State University and for his personal and
82 professional achievements, and commends him for his outstanding
83 accomplishments and service.

84 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution, with
85 the Seal of the Senate affixed, be presented to Florida State
86 University President John Thrasher as a tangible token of the
87 sentiments of the Florida Senate.