

HR 8047

2021

1 House Resolution

2 A resolution honoring George H. Starke, Jr., for the
3 important role he played in the history of higher
4 education in Florida.

5
6 WHEREAS, George H. Starke, Jr., was born on September 8,
7 1931, in Orlando, to Dr. George H. Starke, Sr., a physician in
8 Sanford who was the first African American to gain membership in
9 the Florida Medical Association, and Mattie L. Murrell Starke, a
10 former librarian at Jones High School, and

11 WHEREAS, George H. Starke, Jr., attended Holden Street
12 Elementary School and Jones High School in Orlando before being
13 enrolled at the Alice Freeman Palmer Memorial Institute boarding
14 school in Sedalia, North Carolina, and

15 WHEREAS, after his graduation from the Palmer Memorial
16 Institute in 1949, George H. Starke, Jr., began his studies at
17 Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia, and

18 WHEREAS, because of the Korean War, George H. Starke, Jr.,
19 left Morehouse College to join the United States Air Force,
20 becoming Adjutant to the Depot Commander, and

21 WHEREAS, during his service, George H. Starke, Jr., helped
22 lead a ribbon-cutting ceremony for a brand-new building on the
23 Kisarazu Air Field in Japan, an honor bestowed on Mr. Starke
24 because of his many accomplishments and volunteer work in making
25 base operations more efficient, and

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26 WHEREAS, after the war, George H. Starke, Jr., returned to
27 Morehouse College, where he joined Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity,
28 and

29 WHEREAS, in 1957, when George H. Starke, Jr., graduated
30 from Morehouse College with a bachelor's degree in business
31 administration, it was Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., a Morehouse
32 alumnus, who delivered the commencement address, and

33 WHEREAS, George H. Starke, Jr., then applied to the
34 University of Florida law school and, in 1958, became the first
35 African-American student to enroll at the university in its 105-
36 year history, and

37 WHEREAS, on September 15 of that year, as dozens of
38 photographers and reporters gathered to take his picture, George
39 H. Starke, Jr., entered an auditorium on the university's campus
40 and was separated from his classmates by an empty row, and

41 WHEREAS, throughout the first semester, George H. Starke,
42 Jr., was escorted to classes by members of the Florida Highway
43 Patrol who had hidden their identity and registered as students,
44 enrolling in the same classes as Mr. Starke to ensure his
45 safety, a precaution that would later prove warranted when James
46 Meredith, famous for being the first African-American student
47 admitted to the University of Mississippi, was shot by a sniper
48 several years after Meredith's college admission, and

49 WHEREAS, in spite of the fact that George H. Starke, Jr.,
50 encountered negative incidents while attending the University of

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51 Florida, such as learning that his name had been mentioned at a
52 Ku Klux Klan meeting, being warned by school administrators to
53 avoid driving through the Ocala National Forest due to Klan
54 activity, and finding a mentor only with great difficulty,
55 generally Mr. Starke's classmates left him alone, and

56 WHEREAS, one classmate in particular, Fredric G. Levin, for
57 whom the law school is now named, befriended George H. Starke,
58 Jr., and the two remained lifelong friends until Levin's death
59 in January 2021, and

60 WHEREAS, because of continuing challenges during his
61 enrollment at the University of Florida, George H. Starke, Jr.,
62 withdrew from the institution and saw his departure documented
63 in the campus newspaper, and

64 WHEREAS, George H. Starke, Jr., moved to New York and began
65 a career in investment banking, which involved top positions
66 with Wall Street companies, and

67 WHEREAS, after a career in investment banking and oil
68 distributorship, George H. Starke, Jr., launched his own
69 consulting firm, and

70 WHEREAS, in 2015, George H. Starke, Jr., returned to the
71 Orlando area after living on the East Coast for most of his
72 life, and

73 WHEREAS, despite not having the opportunity to obtain his
74 Juris Doctor degree, George H. Starke, Jr., enjoys a warm and
75 congenial relationship with the University of Florida, having

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76 | served on the Alumni Association Board of Directors and with the
77 | University of Florida Foundation, and

78 | WHEREAS, George H. Starke, Jr., has participated in several
79 | ceremonies for the university's Fredric G. Levin College of Law
80 | and in activities that have marked desegregation at the law
81 | school and was honored by its Center for the Study of Race and
82 | Race Relations in 1998 and 2018, and

83 | WHEREAS, George H. Starke, Jr., was selected for membership
84 | in the Florida Blue Key, an honorary leadership society, and the
85 | university also had a tree planted and a plaque installed on the
86 | grounds of the Levin College of Law in honor of Mr. Starke, and

87 | WHEREAS, in 2009, George H. Starke, Jr., was awarded the
88 | University of Florida's Distinguished Alumnus Award, and, in
89 | 2019, 61 years after he had first entered the law school, Mr.
90 | Starke received the most notable recognition, the honorary
91 | Doctorate of Laws, from the Levin College of Law, and

92 | WHEREAS, today, at nearly 90 years old, George H. Starke,
93 | Jr., still consults on large energy projects and shares a full
94 | and productive life with his wife, Barbara M. Starke, and close
95 | family ties with his son, Andrew Starke; his daughter-in-law,
96 | Angela Starke; and his grandchildren, Sydney and Spencer Starke,
97 | NOW, THEREFORE,

98 |
99 | Be It Resolved by the House of Representatives of the State of
100 | Florida:

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102 That George H. Starke, Jr., is honored for the important
103 role he played in the history of higher education in Florida.

104 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be
105 presented to George H. Starke, Jr., as a tangible token of the
106 sentiments expressed herein.