

HR 8083

2021

House Resolution

A resolution designating October 17, 2021, as "Jean-Jacques Dessalines Day" in Florida.

WHEREAS, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, born in 1758, is one of the founding fathers of Haiti, and

WHEREAS, Dessalines served under the command of acclaimed military leader Toussaint L'Ouverture during the Haitian Revolution to fight for freedom from France, and

WHEREAS, when Toussaint L'Ouverture was deported to France in 1802 by Napoleon's forces, Dessalines continued the fight for freedom during the Haitian Revolution, and

WHEREAS, Dessalines served as Governor-General of Saint-Domingue, what is now Haiti, and went on to serve as the first ruler of an independent Haiti under the 1805 constitution, and

WHEREAS, after freeing the colony from French rule, General Dessalines proclaimed Haiti as an independent country on January 1, 1804, and

WHEREAS, Dessalines declared himself as the first Emperor of Haiti in 1804, and

WHEREAS, under Dessalines, Haiti became the first country in the Americas to permanently abolish slavery, and

WHEREAS, Dessalines created the first iteration of the Haitian flag by taking a French flag and tearing out the white stripe of material, and then having Haitian seamstress,

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26 Catherine Flon, sew together the blue and red material together
27 to symbolize freedom from White rule, and

28 WHEREAS, Dessalines served as Emperor of Haiti until his
29 assassination on October 17, 1806, the anniversary of which is
30 celebrated annually on October 17, as Dessalines Day by the
31 state's Haitian community, and

32 WHEREAS, there is a strong connection between Haiti and
33 Florida, with hundreds of thousands of Haitian-Americans
34 residing in South Florida, NOW, THEREFORE,

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36 Be It Resolved by the House of Representatives of the State of
37 Florida:

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39 That October 17, 2021, is designated as "Jean-Jacques
40 Dessalines Day" in Florida.