

HR 8085

2021

## 1 House Resolution

2 A resolution designating May 18, 2021, as "Haitian  
3 Flag Day" in the State of Florida.  
4

5 WHEREAS, the Republic of Haiti, an island nation located in  
6 the West Indies on the western third of the Island of  
7 Hispaniola, declared its independence from French colonial rule  
8 on January 1, 1804, following a slave revolt under the  
9 leadership of Generals Toussaint L'Ouverture, Jean-Jacques  
10 Dessalines, and Alexandre Pétion, becoming the first and only  
11 state created from a successful slave rebellion, and

12 WHEREAS, Haiti was the first independent nation in Latin  
13 America and the first postcolonial independent nation led by  
14 blacks in the world, and

15 WHEREAS, observed every year on May 18, Haitian Flag Day  
16 was celebrated secretly in Haiti during United States occupation  
17 from 1915 to 1934 and was first celebrated in communities around  
18 the world in the late 1990s, and

19 WHEREAS, the Haitian flag known today, which was officially  
20 adopted in 1806 by President Alexandre Pétion, is emblazoned  
21 with the country's coat of arms and the colors red and blue,  
22 adopted from the flag of France, the country from which Haiti  
23 gained its independence, and

24 WHEREAS, General Jean-Jacques Dessalines is regarded as the  
25 father of the Haitian flag, known to have dramatically cut the

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26 French tricolor with his saber at the May 1803 Arcahaie  
27 conference, ripping away the white of the French flag to  
28 symbolize an end to European influence and leaving two strips  
29 that Catherine Flon then sewed back together: the blue, which  
30 represented the former African slaves brought to Haiti by  
31 colonial powers, and the red, which symbolized people of mixed  
32 European and African descent, and

33 WHEREAS, the Haitian flag is a definitive symbol of pride  
34 for the Caribbean nation, having become the second republic,  
35 after the United States, to defeat a European colonial power in  
36 the Americas, and

37 WHEREAS, Haitian Flag Day events are annually observed and  
38 celebrated with pride and enthusiasm throughout Florida and the  
39 United States, and

40 WHEREAS, as educators, authors, community leaders,  
41 activists, athletes, artists, musicians, and politicians,  
42 Haitians and Haitian Americans have left an indelible mark on  
43 every facet of this nation's society and the world, evidenced by  
44 the accomplishments of such icons as Jean Baptiste Point du  
45 Sable, founder of the City of Chicago; civil rights activist  
46 W.E.B. Du Bois; National Football League player Pierre Garçon;  
47 author and candidate for the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2009,  
48 Frankétienne; and Tony Award-winning actress and singer Nikki M.  
49 James, and

50 WHEREAS, the close proximity of Haitian and Floridian

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51 shores, in conjunction with Haiti and Florida's common bond of  
52 mutual values and commitment to democracy, ensures continued  
53 trade relations, and

54 WHEREAS, with an estimated 1.2 million persons of Haitian  
55 descent now residing in the United States and more than 300,000  
56 Haitian Americans living in South Florida alone, it is important  
57 to acknowledge the positive impact of Haitian Americans in their  
58 contribution to the betterment and diversity of this state and  
59 country, and

60 WHEREAS, Florida and Haiti share a history of freedom, a  
61 common belief in human rights, and diverse, complex, and  
62 resilient peoples who have impacted the world through vibrant  
63 cultures, democracy, and a wealth of talent and achievement, and

64 WHEREAS, Haitian Flag Day salutes the Haitian and Haitian-  
65 American communities and exhibits appreciation for their culture  
66 and heritage, which have immeasurably enriched the lives of the  
67 people of this state and nation, NOW, THEREFORE,

68

69 Be It Resolved by the House of Representatives of the State of  
70 Florida:

71

72 That May 18, 2021, is designated as "Haitian Flag Day" in  
73 the State of Florida.