

By Senator Bean

4-02736-22

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Senate Resolution

A resolution recognizing February 15, 2022, as "Gator Day" in Florida.

WHEREAS, the University of Florida is among the nation's best universities, rising to fifth among all public universities in the 2022 *U.S. News & World Report* Top Public Schools, and

WHEREAS, in 2021, *U.S. News & World Report* for the first time ranked the University of Florida on the prestigious list of the nation's most innovative universities as well as among the top schools on lists for undergraduate research and veterans, and

WHEREAS, UF Online, the University of Florida's online bachelor's degree program, is ranked first in the nation by *U.S. News & World Report*, recognizing the university's continued excellence in delivering world-class educational opportunities across platforms, and

WHEREAS, the University of Florida has installed HiPerGator AI, higher education's most powerful artificial intelligence supercomputer, for training and research purposes, and is the first institution to adopt an "AI Across the Curriculum" approach, providing every student in every major the opportunity to acquire competence and expertise in AI and data science, and

WHEREAS, the University of Florida continues to be at the forefront of AI education, leading the Southeastern Conference's (SEC's) 14 member institutions through the newly established SEC Artificial Intelligence Consortium, sharing educational resources, certificate and degree program structures, and online seminars and courses, and

4-02736-22

20221984\_\_

30 WHEREAS, University of Florida faculty achieved a record  
31 \$960 million in research expenditures in the 2020-2021 fiscal  
32 year, playing a significant role in advancing our fundamental  
33 understanding of the universe, generating creative breakthroughs  
34 that have led to technologies with positive benefits, creating  
35 opportunities for economic growth in this state, and changing  
36 the trajectory of young people through education, and

37 WHEREAS, UF Innovate has helped launch nearly 300  
38 companies, 64 percent of them remaining in Florida and 38  
39 percent in Alachua County, and 12 percent of Florida biotech  
40 companies in business today got their start in UF Innovate's  
41 incubation facilities, and

42 WHEREAS, those incubated companies have created more than  
43 7,900 jobs with an average annual salary of \$79,200 and have  
44 generated more than \$12 billion in private investments, and

45 WHEREAS, the University of Florida Lastinger Center,  
46 working in collaboration with the Florida Department of  
47 Education, school districts, and other local and state  
48 organizations and with the support of the Florida Legislature,  
49 has successfully implemented the New Worlds Reading Initiative,  
50 a free Florida literacy program that, each month, mails a new  
51 book to eligible, enrolled K-5 students in this state to support  
52 each student in successfully launching his or her reading skills  
53 and developing a love of reading, and

54 WHEREAS, University of Florida Health is a top-ranked  
55 health care destination that attracts the brightest students,  
56 scholars, scientists, and health care providers, all ready to  
57 tackle patients' greatest challenges, contributing more than  
58 \$4.6 billion to Florida's overall economy and being uniquely

4-02736-22

20221984\_\_

59 positioned to be at the forefront of medicine, making  
60 discoveries that lead to clinical breakthroughs, and

61 WHEREAS, current and former University of Florida athletes  
62 represented the United States during the 2020 Summer Olympics in  
63 Tokyo, winning, as it has done once before, 17 medals – the  
64 second-highest medal count in school history – to rank second  
65 among all NCAA schools in medals won, and

66 WHEREAS, the University of Florida athletic program  
67 continues its on-field and in-the-classroom success, becoming  
68 the only program to finish among the nation's top 10 in each of  
69 the last 37 national all-sports standings and the only  
70 university with 100 or more academic all-SEC honorees in the  
71 last 24 seasons, NOW, THEREFORE,

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

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75 That the University of Florida is recognized and  
76 congratulated for its dedication to the advancement of this  
77 state and on its rise to fifth in the 2022 *U.S. News & World*  
78 *Report Top Public Schools*, and that February 15, 2022, is  
79 recognized as "Gator Day" in Florida.

80 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution, with  
81 the Seal of the Senate affixed, be presented to University of  
82 Florida President W. Kent Fuchs, Ph.D., as a tangible token of  
83 the sentiments of the Florida Senate.