

By Senator Rouson

19-03919-22

20222000\_\_

1 Senate Resolution

2 A resolution honoring *La Gaceta*, one of the oldest  
3 minority-owned and -focused newspapers, and the only  
4 trilingual newspaper in the United States, for 100  
5 years of continued service to Florida's Latino  
6 community.

7  
8 WHEREAS, *La Gaceta*, the Spanish-language daily newspaper,  
9 was founded by Victoriano Manteiga, who immigrated in 1913 from  
10 Cuba to West Tampa to accept a job in the Morgan Cigar Factory  
11 reading books and newspapers aloud to the *torcedores*, or cigar  
12 rollers, while they worked, and

13 WHEREAS, in 1922, Victoriano Manteiga discussed his idea of  
14 publishing a Spanish-language newspaper with Dr. Jose Avellanal,  
15 an admired doctor and humanitarian, who contacted the Mascunana  
16 Printers, and their combined efforts yielded the first issue of  
17 *La Gaceta*, published on May 22, 1922, which went on to be  
18 published 6 days per week in Ybor City, with wire service from  
19 Cuba and Spain, and

20 WHEREAS, *La Gaceta* was born from the need to educate,  
21 inform, and entertain the Latino community living and working in  
22 Ybor City and West Tampa, filling a void created by the Anglo-  
23 owned press which, at the time, mostly ignored immigrants or  
24 reported negatively about their activities, and

25 WHEREAS, the newspaper championed causes important to  
26 Florida's Latino community, such as the rights of laborers,  
27 access to education and recreation, gaining a voice in politics,  
28 supporting the Republic in the Spanish Civil War, and an  
29 independent Cuba free from corruption, and

19-03919-22

20222000\_\_

30 WHEREAS, the newspaper survived the Great Depression and  
31 the rationing of lead and newsprint in World War II by the  
32 perseverance of the Manteiga family and support of the  
33 community, and

34 WHEREAS, at the outbreak of World War II, Victoriano  
35 Manteiga's son, Roland, who worked at *La Gaceta*, volunteered to  
36 serve in the United States Army and was shipped out with many  
37 Tampa Latinos to the Pacific Theatre, leaving Victoriano  
38 Manteiga to struggle with publishing the newspaper in his son's  
39 absence, and

40 WHEREAS, after the war, *La Gaceta's* readership and  
41 advertising suffered due to the collapse of the cigar industry  
42 in Tampa and the migration of the Latino community to the  
43 suburbs, with opportunities for Latinos and the descendants of  
44 the original immigrants from Spain, Cuba, and Italy more  
45 dependent on the English language than Spanish, and

46 WHEREAS, to adjust to these changes, *La Gaceta* became a  
47 weekly paper in 1953, and in 1954, English-language and Italian-  
48 language articles began to appear in its pages, making it a  
49 trilingual publication, and

50 WHEREAS, on June 11, 1954, Roland Manteiga began writing  
51 his weekly political gossip column, "As We Heard It," which  
52 became a must-read for inside information in government and  
53 politics and served as a voice for Tampa's Hispanic community  
54 for more than 40 years, and

55 WHEREAS, in the 1960s, Ybor City hit a low point due to the  
56 destruction of the community by urban renewal and the  
57 construction of the interstates in Tampa, leaving the Latin  
58 Quarter a shadow of itself, although *La Gaceta* remained,

19-03919-22

20222000\_\_

59 documenting the area's history and demise and fighting for its  
60 future, and

61 WHEREAS, with Roland Manteiga at the helm, *La Gaceta* was  
62 instrumental in bringing Hillsborough Community College, the  
63 Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office, and the Environmental  
64 Protection Commission to Ybor City, all of which help keep it  
65 alive, and

66 WHEREAS, Roland Manteiga became an influencer for those  
67 seeking to be elected to office, with many national, state, and  
68 local leaders paying him visits, and with son Patrick Manteiga  
69 by his side starting in 1983, he used this and *La Gaceta's*  
70 influence to promote Ybor City's renaissance and to help save  
71 historic buildings that housed the mutual aid societies, Circulo  
72 Cubano, Centro Asturiano, and L'Unione Italiana, and

73 WHEREAS, after Roland Manteiga's passing on September 25,  
74 1998, his son, Patrick Manteiga, took over as publisher and  
75 today continues the tradition of his father's "As We Heard It"  
76 column and of the newspaper as a voice of the Latino community  
77 while keeping an eye on the powers that be, and

78 WHEREAS, now for more than a century, *La Gaceta*, one of the  
79 oldest minority-owned and -focused newspapers, and the only  
80 trilingual newspaper, in the United States, continues to serve  
81 Citrus, Hillsborough, Hernando, Manatee, Orange, Osceola, Pasco,  
82 Pinellas, Polk, and Sarasota Counties, NOW, THEREFORE,

83

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

85

86 That the Florida Senate honors *La Gaceta* newspaper for 100  
87 years of continued service to Florida's Latino community.