

By Senator Rouson

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Senate Resolution

A resolution recognizing and honoring the Florida A&M University Rattlers football team for winning the 2023 HBCU National Championship.

WHEREAS, on December 16, 2023, the Florida A&M University Rattlers football team clinched the 2023 Historically Black College and University (HBCU) National Championship with a 30-26 victory over the Howard University Bison in the Celebration Bowl, held at Mercedes-Benz Stadium in Atlanta, Georgia, and

WHEREAS, Head Coach Willie Simmons led the Rattlers to their best season since 1998, winning 10 regular season games, the Southwestern Athletic Conference Championship, and ultimately the HBCU National Championship in the Rattlers' first-ever appearance in the Celebration Bowl, and

WHEREAS, even before the season began, as the team endured arduous training in the hot and humid summer, Coach Simmons told his players that they could be exceptional and that they could be remembered as one of the greatest teams in FAMU history, and

WHEREAS, the gold standard was set in 1978, when the Rattlers became the first and only HBCU team to win the national championship in Division I-AA, now called the Football Championship Subdivision, and

WHEREAS, 45 years after that historic victory, the Rattlers made more history by beating Howard in the Celebration Bowl, winning the HBCU National Championship in front of more than 41,000 fans, including Vice President Kamala Harris, and over 2 million viewers watching from home, and

WHEREAS, in front of the nation and the world, the evidence

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30 is clear that the young men in orange and green are building a
31 championship culture of excellence, NOW, THEREFORE,

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

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35 That the Florida A&M University Rattlers football team is
36 recognized and congratulated for winning the 2023 HBCU National
37 Championship as part of a remarkable 12-1 season.

38 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Florida A&M University
39 Rattlers football team is celebrated, as is the university's
40 commitment to both academic and athletic excellence, for
41 creating a collegiate presence that is nationally renowned.

42 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution, with
43 the Seal of the Senate affixed, be presented to Florida A&M
44 University President Larry Robinson, Ph.D., Director of
45 Athletics Tiffani-Dawn Sykes, Head Coach Willie Simmons, the
46 Rattlers coaching staff, and the members of the Florida A&M
47 University Rattlers football team as a tangible token of the
48 sentiments of the Florida Senate.