

By Senator Margolis

35-00897-16

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1                                   A bill to be entitled  
2           An act relating to state symbols; creating s. 15.053,  
3           F.S.; designating the Big Orange as the official state  
4           symbol for New Year's Eve celebrations; providing an  
5           effective date.

6  
7           WHEREAS, the Greater Miami Host Committee, Inc., chaired by  
8           Monty Trainer, has been recognized by the Florida Senate for  
9           hosting and producing world-class signature events that promote  
10          globalization, tourism, business, industry, trade and commerce,  
11          culture, education, governmental relations, international  
12          affairs, and community and economic development to local,  
13          national, and international markets, and

14          WHEREAS, these international signature events encourage  
15          hospitality, goodwill, trust, and international exchange, and

16          WHEREAS, 30 years ago, Rodney Barreto, then executive  
17          director of the Greater Miami Host Committee, Inc., created and  
18          launched the Big Orange New Year's Eve Celebration, hosted by  
19          the City of Miami, commissioning the design and construction of  
20          the Big Orange to ignite the same enthusiasm and anticipation as  
21          New York City's Times Square Big Apple, and

22          WHEREAS, designed by internationally acclaimed industrial  
23          artist Steve Carpenter, the Big Orange is 35 feet in diameter,  
24          weighs 2,000 pounds, and has become an LED-lighted icon, and

25          WHEREAS, in 1995, the Big Orange was dubbed the "Times  
26          Square of the South" and simulcast with the Dick Clark's New  
27          Year's Rockin' Eve television broadcast, and

28          WHEREAS, the Big Orange has been recognized as an official  
29          United States time ball and is linked to the United States Naval

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30 Observatory Master Clock, and

31 WHEREAS, the Big Orange and its celebration attract a  
32 diverse audience of 150,000 to 250,000 local revelers and  
33 international visitors annually, as well as a worldwide  
34 television viewership of more than 50 million, and

35 WHEREAS, the Big Orange New Year's Eve Celebration is  
36 recognized as one of the top 10 New Year's Eve destination  
37 events in the world by MSN-USA Today, and

38 WHEREAS, in 2013, under the Big Orange banner "La Gran  
39 Naranja," the City of Miami and honorary chair Mayor Tomas P.  
40 Regalado launched Viva Florida 500, the quincentennial  
41 commemoration of the discovery of Florida in 1513 by Spanish  
42 explorer Ponce de Leon, who brought the orange from Spain to  
43 Florida that same year, and

44 WHEREAS, on December 31, 2014, Miami, as Florida's most  
45 culturally diverse city and the international epicenter of art,  
46 culture, business, music, education, technology, media, sports,  
47 and entertainment, hosted its very first live, family-friendly  
48 New Year's Eve television special, conceived and co-produced by  
49 Latin Grammy Award-winning artist Pitbull, and

50 WHEREAS, during the 2015 celebration, the Big Orange served  
51 as a symbol of the United Nations World Tourism Organization's  
52 call to increase policies and business practices that promote  
53 gender equality and women's empowerment through tourism and  
54 allied industries, NOW, THEREFORE,

55  
56 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

57  
58 Section 1. Section 15.053, Florida Statutes, is created to

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59 read:

60 15.053 Official state symbol for New Year's Eve  
61 celebrations.-The Big Orange is designated as the official state  
62 symbol of New Year's Eve celebrations in this state.

63 Section 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law.