

HM 1427

2014

House Memorial

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2 A memorial to the Congress of the United States,
3 urging Congress to support the Florida citrus industry
4 in its efforts to combat and defeat huanglongbing,
5 also known as HLB or citrus greening disease, through
6 policy initiatives, regulatory support, and adequate
7 funding.

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9 WHEREAS, as the largest citrus producer in the United
10 States, Florida's citrus industry generates 75,800 jobs and has
11 an estimated \$8.91 billion in economic impact annually, forming
12 the financial backbone of many families and communities across
13 the state, and

14 WHEREAS, in 2005, huanglongbing, also known as HLB or
15 citrus greening disease, was discovered in an orange grove in
16 Southeast Florida and has since spread to all 32 counties that
17 commercially produce citrus, and

18 WHEREAS, citrus greening disease is a bacterial disease
19 that attacks the vascular system of a citrus tree, diminishing
20 the tree's production and economic value before eventually
21 causing the tree to die, and

22 WHEREAS, since its discovery in Florida, citrus greening
23 disease has caused \$4.5 billion in economic damages and has cost
24 the state an estimated 8,200 jobs, and

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25 WHEREAS, experts predict that small and middle-sized citrus
 26 farmers will be out of business within 2 years if better tools
 27 and techniques are not developed by growers and scientists to
 28 combat the spread and effects of citrus greening disease, and

29 WHEREAS, the citrus industry's entire infrastructure,
 30 including processing plants, fresh fruit packinghouses, and
 31 ancillary businesses, are at risk if production losses due to
 32 citrus greening disease are not recaptured, and

33 WHEREAS, as citrus greening disease continues to cause
 34 major damage to citrus production, the long-term success of
 35 Florida's citrus industry will be dependent upon breakthroughs
 36 in the fight against the disease, and

37 WHEREAS, as the second largest producer of orange juice in
 38 the world, Florida's citrus industry is an important contributor
 39 to both Florida's and the nation's economy, NOW, THEREFORE,

40

41 Be It Resolved by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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43 That the Congress of the United States is urged to support
 44 the Florida citrus industry in its efforts to combat and defeat
 45 huanglongbing, also known as HLB or citrus greening disease,
 46 through policy initiatives, regulatory support, and adequate
 47 funding.

48 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
 49 dispatched to the President of the United States, to the

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50 | President of the United States Senate, to the Speaker of the
51 | United States House of Representatives, and to each member of
52 | the Florida delegation to the United States Congress.