

By Senator Hukill

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Senate Resolution

A resolution recognizing the dedicated and inspiring Florida athletes who competed in the 2014 Winter Olympic Games in Sochi, Russia.

WHEREAS, on January 27, 2014, the 230-member 2014 United States Olympic Team was announced, consisting of 106 returning Olympians, 13 of whom were Olympic champions, and

WHEREAS, even though the Sunshine State is short on snow and ice, seven Floridians were among those selected to compete in the 2014 Winter Olympic Games, held February 7-23, 2014, and

WHEREAS, five of the seven selected athletes made their Olympic debuts, Eddy Alvarez, Nathan Bartholomay, Brittany Bowe, Joey Mantia, and Felicia Zhang; and two were returning Olympians, Chris Focht and Lauryn Williams, and

WHEREAS, each of our athletes has an inspiring story of years of training, personal battles, dedication, sacrifice, and overcoming adversity, which has led him or her to the starting line and the chance to represent the United States on an international stage, and

WHEREAS, the United States was represented on the ice by long track speed skaters Brittany Bowe and Joey Mantia, both of Ocala in Marion County, and

WHEREAS, Brittany Bowe started skating at Skate Mania in Ocala at the age of 8, and she has since competed in inline skating world championships, where she has won a total of 32 medals, and

WHEREAS, Brittany Bowe has valued being a team player throughout her life, especially when playing basketball for

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30 Florida Atlantic University, and

31 WHEREAS, after graduating from college in 2010, Brittany
32 Bowe switched from inline skating to speed skating and was on
33 the ice for the first time that year, and

34 WHEREAS, after just one season on the ice, Brittany Bowe
35 earned a spot on the United States Long Track Sprint National
36 Team and the United States World Cup Team, and, in the 2013-2014
37 racing season, she was ranked second in the world in the 1,000-
38 meter distance, and

39 WHEREAS, Joey Mantia became an inline speed skater at a
40 very young age and went on to win 26 gold medals for world
41 inline skating, and

42 WHEREAS, between 2003 and 2007, Joey Mantia was named
43 American Speed Skater of the Year four times, and

44 WHEREAS, Joey Mantia's dream of being an Olympian led him
45 to make the move to the ice to further challenge himself, and

46 WHEREAS, after his move to long track speed skating, Joey
47 Mantia found his stride during the 2013-2014 season, claiming
48 his first individual World Cup Gold Medal in the 1,500-meter
49 skate, and

50 WHEREAS, pairs figure skaters Nathan Bartholomay and
51 Felicia Zhang teamed up in May 2011, training 30 hours a week at
52 the Ice and Sports Complex in Ellenton in Manatee County, and

53 WHEREAS, since Nathan Bartholomay and Felicia Zhang began
54 skating together, they have earned a bronze medal at the 2013
55 National Championships and a silver medal at the 2014 National
56 Championships, and

57 WHEREAS, Nathan Bartholomay and Felicia Zhang began skating
58 at a young age, with Felicia beginning at the age of 7 after she

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59 attended a skating birthday party and Nathan beginning at the
60 age of 8 after his family encouraged him to follow his sister's
61 path and pursue skating, and

62 WHEREAS, before Nathan Bartholomay began skating with
63 Felicia Zhang in 2010, he was the United States Junior Bronze
64 Medalist, and

65 WHEREAS, when he is not training with Felicia Zhang, Nathan
66 Bartholomay works part-time, takes courses in sports therapy,
67 and coaches the next generation of skaters, and

68 WHEREAS, in 2008, Felicia Zhang received the United States
69 Novice Bronze Medal as a single skater, and won the 2010 United
70 States junior pairs title with a former partner, and

71 WHEREAS, Felicia Zhang is currently a student at the
72 University of South Florida, where she studies psychology, and

73 WHEREAS, short track speed skater Eddy Alvarez, a Miamian
74 from Miami-Dade County, started skating on the streets of South
75 Beach at the age of 5, and

76 WHEREAS, Eddy Alvarez proved himself as someone who never
77 gives up in the face of adversity when he underwent 5 hours of
78 grueling surgery to repair 12 tears to his patellar tendons, and

79 WHEREAS, Eddy Alvarez trains 6 days a week during the
80 season, which paid off when he became the first Cuban-American
81 male ever to win a Winter Olympic medal, taking home the silver
82 medal with his team in the 5,000-meter relay, and

83 WHEREAS, Chris Fogt, born in Orange Park in Clay County,
84 made his Olympic debut at the 2010 Winter Olympic Games in
85 Vancouver, British Columbia, and

86 WHEREAS, after competing in Vancouver, Chris Fogt spent a
87 year deployed in Iraq as a Second Lieutenant in the Military

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88 Intelligence branch of the United States Army, and

89 WHEREAS, Chris Fogt began competing in the sport of bobsled
90 in 2007, after attending a camp in Lake Placid, New York, and

91 WHEREAS, throughout his career, Chris Fogt has won many
92 medals and, during the 2014 Winter Olympic Games, took home the
93 bronze medal in the Men's Four-Man Bobsled competition, and

94 WHEREAS, Chris Fogt will return to active duty on May 5,
95 2014, and his service and sacrifice to our country are greatly
96 appreciated, and

97 WHEREAS, four-time Olympian Lauryn Williams, of Miami in
98 Miami-Dade County, graduated in 2004 from the University of
99 Miami, and

100 WHEREAS, previously a track-and-field athlete competing as
101 a sprinter, Lauryn Williams won a silver medal in the 100-meter
102 dash at the 2004 Summer Olympic Games in Athens, Greece, and a
103 gold medal in the 4x100-meter relay at the 2012 Summer Olympic
104 Games in London, England, and

105 WHEREAS, Lauryn Williams also won a gold medal in the 100-
106 meter dash and a gold medal in the 4x100-meter relay at the 2005
107 World Championships in Helsinki, Finland, and

108 WHEREAS, Lauryn Williams began practicing the sport of
109 bobsled only in 2013, but she was able to bring home the silver
110 medal in the 2014 Winter Olympic Games, making the United States
111 the only nation to win medals in every women's bobsled Olympic
112 event since the sport made its debut at the 2002 Winter Olympic
113 Games in Salt Lake City, Utah, and

114 WHEREAS, Lauryn Williams continues to give back to the
115 community through the Lauryn Williams Dynamic Female Athlete
116 Scholarship Fund, which she established in 2006 to assist

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117 emerging female athletes, NOW, THEREFORE,

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

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121 That the athletic accomplishments, sacrifice, and
122 dedication of Florida's Olympians, Eddy Alvarez, Nathan
123 Bartholomay, Brittany Bowe, Chris Fogt, Joey Mantia, Lauryn
124 Williams, and Felicia Zhang, are recognized and that these
125 talented athletes and members of the 2014 United States Olympic
126 Team will continue to inspire others to follow their dreams.

127 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that it is recognized that the many
128 accomplishments of the Team USA Olympians would not have been
129 possible without the love and support of their coaches, their
130 communities, and, most importantly, their families.

131 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Floridians stand united in
132 their respect and admiration for our Olympians and their
133 achievements in the 2014 Olympic Winter Games in Sochi, Russia.