

By Senator Thompson

12-01790-15

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1 Senate Resolution

2 A resolution recognizing January 2015 as "Haitian  
3 Independence Month" in Florida.

4  
5 WHEREAS, located in the West Indies on the western third of  
6 the Island of Hispaniola, Haiti lies between Cuba and Puerto  
7 Rico in the Caribbean Sea, and

8 WHEREAS, the island was first inhabited by native tribes,  
9 the Arawak, Taíno, and Caraibe, and in 1492 was claimed by  
10 Christopher Columbus for Spain, which later ceded the western  
11 third of the island to France, and

12 WHEREAS, after the French Revolution in 1789, and under the  
13 leadership of Generals Toussaint L'Ouverture, Dessalines, and  
14 Pétion, slaves revolted against the oppressive slavery regime,  
15 and

16 WHEREAS, on January 1, 1804, the Republic of Haiti declared  
17 its independence and became the first, and only, state to be  
18 created from a successful slave rebellion, and

19 WHEREAS, Haiti was the first independent nation in Latin  
20 America and the first post-colonial independent nation led by  
21 blacks in the world, and

22 WHEREAS, by declaring independence, Haiti became the second  
23 independent state in the Western Hemisphere, joining only the  
24 United States in this unique and exemplary distinction, and

25 WHEREAS, Haiti and the United States share a history of  
26 freedom and belief in human rights, and

27 WHEREAS, on May 20, 1805, Haiti ratified its first  
28 constitution, strengthening national unity and bringing together  
29 the country's various factions and peoples by reaffirming the

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30 permanent abolition of slavery and the freedom and equality of  
31 all Haitians, and

32 WHEREAS, Haitians and Haitian Americans have played an  
33 important role in the history of the Americas as educators,  
34 leaders, activists, and artists, and

35 WHEREAS, many famous and inspirational Haitians and Haitian  
36 Americans have left their indelible mark on this state, country,  
37 and the world, including icons such as Jean Baptiste Point du  
38 Sable, founder of the City of Chicago; civil rights activist  
39 W.E.B. Du Bois; State Representative Yolly Roberson; City of  
40 North Miami Mayor Smith Joseph; National Football League player  
41 Pierre Garçon; author and candidate for the Nobel Prize for  
42 Literature in 2009, Frankétienne; and Tony Award-winning actress  
43 and singer Nikki M. James, and

44 WHEREAS, Florida is home to nearly half a million Haitian  
45 Americans who improve our communities with a wealth of talent  
46 and achievement and strive, through their diversity and culture,  
47 to exemplify the meaning of freedom and democracy, and

48 WHEREAS, Little Haiti, in the City of Miami, is a symbol of  
49 the undeniable relationship between this state and the Republic  
50 of Haiti, and

51 WHEREAS, the richness and complexness of Haiti's resilient  
52 culture and people transformed the island into an exceptional  
53 nation that has continued to profoundly impact the world since  
54 Christopher Columbus set foot on its shores more than 500 years  
55 ago, NOW, THEREFORE,

56  
57 Be It Resolved by the Senate of the State of Florida:  
58

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59           That January 2015 is recognized as "Haitian Independence  
60 Month" in Florida, and the citizens of Haiti and Haitian  
61 Americans are encouraged to observe this month with celebrations  
62 and joy.