

By Senator Bullard

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1 Senate Resolution

2 A resolution recognizing February 11, 2016, as
3 "Florida Muslim Capitol Day."

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5 WHEREAS, Florida Muslim Capitol Day was created by and for
6 American Muslims living in this state to increase their civic
7 engagement and political participation, and

8 WHEREAS, Florida Muslim Capitol Day is an annual community-
9 based event organized through the collaborative leadership of
10 the Florida Muslim community to educate Muslims on the state's
11 political process and to encourage them to engage in political
12 activism in Florida, and

13 WHEREAS, the Pew Research Center estimates that there are
14 3.3 million Muslims now living in the United States, composing
15 about 1 percent of the total population, a figure that is
16 expected to double by 2050, and

17 WHEREAS, approximately 523,000 Muslims, or 3 percent of the
18 total Florida population, currently reside in Florida's 67
19 counties, and

20 WHEREAS, Florida is home to one of the most diverse Muslim
21 populations in the world and includes people of every school of
22 thought and ethnic groups originating from more than 80
23 countries on four continents, and

24 WHEREAS, Florida's Muslim community includes immigrants and
25 second- and third-generation Arabs, Latinos, Asians, Europeans,
26 and Africans, and

27 WHEREAS, persons from Southeast Asia and Arab nations each
28 compose about a third of Florida's Muslim population, American-
29 born blacks compose a fifth of the total, and a growing number
30 of Muslims in this state are native-born Anglo and Hispanic
31 converts, and

32 WHEREAS, a survey released by the Public Religion Research

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33 Institute shows that Floridians' perceptions of Muslims have
34 turned increasingly negative in recent years, with 56 percent of
35 those surveyed expressing the belief that the values of Muslims
36 are at odds with American values and our way of life, up from 47
37 percent who expressed that belief in 2011, and

38 WHEREAS, to combat these alarming statistics, Florida
39 Muslim Capitol Day brings hundreds of Muslim leaders, community
40 members, and students from across the state to Tallahassee to
41 meet with elected officials, and

42 WHEREAS, Florida Muslim Capitol Day empowers the Florida
43 Muslim community to participate in the state's democratic
44 political process, to not be intimidated and silenced by the
45 voices of intolerance, and to inform Florida's elected officials
46 about the concerns of their Muslim constituents, and

47 WHEREAS, the growth of the American Muslim community has
48 fostered the development of a variety of religious, civic,
49 political, cultural, economic, social, ethnic, feminist,
50 artistic, and professional organizations, and it is fitting to
51 recognize and commend Florida Muslims who are at the forefront
52 of civic engagement as informed, effective, and responsible
53 citizens, NOW, THEREFORE,

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

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57 That, in recognition of the hard work, commitment, and
58 dedication of the Florida Muslim community to knowledgeable
59 participation in our democracy and our democratic institutions;
60 in recognition of the dedication of Florida's Muslims to making
61 significant contributions to the community; and in honor of

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62 educated citizens who understand and accept the responsibilities
63 and obligations of citizenship, February 11, 2016, is recognized
64 as "Florida Muslim Capitol Day."