

By Senator Perry

9-02928-23

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Senate Resolution

A resolution recognizing April 12, 2023, as "Gator Day" in Florida.

WHEREAS, the University of Florida (UF) is ranked among the nation's very best universities, remaining fifth for the second year in a row among all public universities in the 2023 *U.S. News & World Report* Best Colleges rankings, and

WHEREAS, University of Florida faculty surpassed \$1 billion in research spending for the first time in 2022, funding that leads to treatments for diseases, new agricultural products, and advances in engineering and many other fields, and UF now belongs to an exclusive group of 15 public universities nationally that are at the \$1 billion milestone, and

WHEREAS, for the first time in 2023, *U.S. News & World Report* ranked the University of Florida as the top institution in the country to offer an online bachelor's degree for veterans and active-duty servicemembers, acknowledging the university's longstanding tradition of supporting U.S. military members pursuing higher education, and

WHEREAS, UF Online, the university's online bachelor's degree program, is ranked as the stand-alone No. 1 Best Online Bachelor's Program in the nation by *U.S. News & World Report*, recognizing the university's continued excellence in delivering world-class educational opportunities across platforms, and

WHEREAS, the University of Florida ranks No. 2 nationally among public universities and No. 4 among all public and private universities for students' economic return, according to Degree Choices Best College Rankings, leading students to greater

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30 financial security, and

31 WHEREAS, the University of Florida ranks first among public  
32 universities and second nationwide in a report by Heartland  
33 Forward that evaluates which U.S. universities are best at  
34 moving new discoveries from the laboratory to the real world  
35 through research commercialization and STEM graduates, and

36 WHEREAS, eleven students from UF were selected for the  
37 Fulbright U.S. Student Program for academic year 2022-2023, and  
38 for the first time in a decade, the U.S. Department of State's  
39 Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs named the University  
40 of Florida a Fulbright Top Producing Institution for U.S.  
41 Students, recognizing UF among those U.S. colleges and  
42 universities that had the highest number of applicants selected  
43 for the 2022-2023 Fulbright awards, and

44 WHEREAS, the University of Florida has installed HiPerGator  
45 AI, one of higher education's most powerful supercomputers, for  
46 training and research purposes, and is the first institution to  
47 adopt an "AI Across the Curriculum" model so that every student,  
48 regardless of discipline, has at least a basic familiarity with  
49 how artificial intelligence will meet societal needs ranging  
50 from health care to education to national security, and

51 WHEREAS, the University of Florida, in partnership with the  
52 State of Florida and industry leaders, is leading the way in  
53 developing an AI-skilled workforce of tomorrow by designing AI  
54 for K-12, a framework for Florida's elementary and secondary  
55 schools' AI coursework, with the goal of increasing students'  
56 awareness of how AI is used in their everyday lives and their  
57 knowledge of how AI works, and

58 WHEREAS, UF Health is a top-ranked health care destination

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59 attracting the brightest students, scholars, scientists, and  
60 health care providers, all ready to tackle patients' greatest  
61 challenges, and

62 WHEREAS, UF Health contributes more than \$4.6 billion  
63 annually to Florida's overall economy and is uniquely positioned  
64 at the forefront of medicine to make discoveries that lead to  
65 clinical breakthroughs, and

66 WHEREAS, UF Health Shands Children's Hospital remains one  
67 of the Southeast's premier pediatric medical centers, ranking as  
68 Florida's No. 1 children's hospital, with five pediatric  
69 specialties earning it the elite distinction of being ranked  
70 among the nation's best by *U.S. News & World Report*, and

71 WHEREAS, with the integration of Scripps Research Institute  
72 into the University of Florida, the Herbert Wertheim UF Scripps  
73 Institute for Biomedical Innovation & Technology blends the  
74 clinical expertise of a top 5 public university with the  
75 creative energies of one of the world's leading biomedical  
76 research organizations, accelerating discoveries that benefit  
77 patients, NOW, THEREFORE,

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

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81 That the University of Florida is commended and  
82 congratulated for its dedication to the advancement of the State  
83 of Florida, and that April 12, 2023, is recognized as "Gator  
84 Day" in Florida.

85 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution, with  
86 the Seal of the Senate affixed, be presented to University of  
87 Florida President Dr. Ben Sasse as a tangible token of the

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88 sentiments of the Florida Senate.