

## **STUDENT SENATE BILL 2021-1028**

**TITLE: Resolution Supporting the Free Cuba Movement**

**AUTHOR(S): Senate President Franco Luis, Senator Kristian Carreno, Senator Juanita Prieto, Chomp the Vote Chair Chloe Parrish, Chomp the Vote Chair Damon Veras**

**SPONSOR(S): Member-at-Large Aaron Armando Arriaga, Senator Christopher Bass, Senator Alexander Repke, Senator Alexander Ngo, Senator Allison Rothman, Senator Nicolas Narvades, Senator Walker Bean, Senator Ryan Erickson, Chairwoman Shannon Locascio, Senator Lauren Bonet, Senator John Brinkman, Senator Darren Peters, Senator Phoebe Funai, Senator Carter Graham, Senator Madi Kukos, Senator Aaron Lazar, Senator John Hazzard, Students Taking Action Against Racism Chairman William Ortiz, Senator Drew Pancione, Senator Dillon Gomen, Senator Carlos Naranjo, Senator Edris Costianis, Senator Noel Martinez-Pla, Senator Sofia Perez, Senator Adeel Markatia**

**WHEREAS**, on July 11, 2021, hundreds of thousands of Cuban citizens took to the streets to protest the communist regime following food shortages, severe electrical blackouts, and a lack of medicine across the island [1]; and,

**WHEREAS**, recent statistics from the Cuban Ministry of Health indicate there are over 32,000 active cases of COVID-19, with only fifteen percent of the Cuban population being fully vaccinated [3]; and,

**WHEREAS**, the communist regime has previously rejected international humanitarian aid to combat the COVID-19 pandemic despite ongoing cries for help from Cuban citizens [4]; and,

**WHEREAS**, as the social and economic situation in Cuba has deteriorated, the communist regime has, incorrectly, attempted to blame the United States for issues they have caused [4]; and,

**WHEREAS**, in response to the widespread protests, Cuban Dictator Miguel Diaz Canel incited violence among the Cuban people when he proclaimed, “The order to fight has been given — into the street, revolutionaries!” [2]; and,

**WHEREAS**, Cuban regime officials are targeting peaceful protesters, including religious leaders such as Father Castor Jose Alvarez Devesa, who was brutally assaulted and detained [5]; and,

**WHEREAS**, generations of Cubans have immigrated to the State of Florida and attended the University of Florida, representing Cuba through strong leadership and continued academic excellence; and,

**WHEREAS**, hundreds of thousands of Floridians are protesting in solidarity with the #FreeCuba #PatriaYVida movement, specifically in South Florida, where demonstrators have shown strong support for the Cuban people [6]; then,

**THEREFORE, LET BE RESOLVED** that the University of Florida Student Senate recognizes the suffering of the Cuban people at the hands of the communist regime.

**THEREFORE, LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED** that the University of Florida Student Senate condemns the human rights atrocities committed by the communist regime.

**THEREFORE, LET IT FINALLY BE RESOLVED** that the University of Florida Student Senate stands in solidarity with the protestors of the Free Cuba Movement.

*Proviso: A copy of this resolution shall be sent to Bay of Pigs Museum, Governor Ron Desantis, Lieutenant Governor Jeanette Nunez, Senator Marco Rubio, Senator Rick Scott, Congressman Carlos Curbelo, Congressman Mario Diaz Balart, Congresswoman Maria Elvira Salazar, Mayor Francis Suarez, Mayor Daniella Levine-Cava, President W. Kent Fuchs, Provost Joseph Glover, Vice President for Student Affairs Dr. D'Andra Mull*

[1] <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-57813704>

[2] <https://www.businessinsider.com/cuban-president-fight-in-the-streets-amid-protests-2021-7>

[3] <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/11/world/americas/cuba-crisis-protests.html>

[4] <https://www.wsj.com/articles/behind-cubas-covid-uprising-11626042703>

[5] <https://www.uscirf.gov/news-room/releases-statements/uscirf-condemns-detention-religious-leaders-amid-protests-cuba>

[6] <https://apnews.com/article/lifestyle-cuba-miami-boating-eae2b37e75e40861e1754cde45d41d65>