

STUDENT SENATE BILL 2024-1196

TITLE: Resolution Commemorating Black History Month

AUTHOR(S): Senator Raj Mia, Minority Party Leader Nathaniel Pelton

SPONSOR(S): Senator Elizabeth Insuasti, Judiciary Chairman AJ Amster, Senator Jonathan Bedine, Senator LJ Bryan, Senator Vivian Phung, Senator Megan Lamey, Senator Isha Khan, YDSA SGEWGTC Ronin Lupien, Minority Party Leader Nathaniel Pelton, Senator Arturo Zárrate

WHEREAS, Black History Month is annual national holiday of the United States celebrated since 19 76 and codified in 1986 to be celebrated every February [1]; and,

WHEREAS, Black History Month originated from "Negro History Week," which was created in 1926 by Carter G. Woodson and the Association for the Study of African American Life and History [2]; and,

WHEREAS, "Those who have no record of what their forebears have accomplished lose the inspiration which comes from the teaching of biography and history" - Carter G. Woodson [3]; and,

WHEREAS, it is crucial to acknowledge the ongoing struggle against systemic racism, inequality, and injustice that African Americans face, drawing inspiration from figures such as Harriet Tubman, Frederick Douglass, Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X, and contemporary activists who have fought and continue to fight for freedom, equality, and justice; and,

WHEREAS, the University of Florida Black Student Union, founded in 1968, has promoted, expanded the education of, and exemplified Black heritage and culture through event programming in partnership with other student organizations across the university; and,

WHEREAS, on April 15, 1971, the University of Florida Black Student Union organized a sit-in to protest the university's shortage of Black faculty and demand improved representation and equity with the founding of the Institute for Black Culture (IBC) and the Office of the Minority Student Affairs [4]; and,

WHEREAS, this demonstration, known as Black Thursday, led to the suspension and arrest of sixty-six Black students [4]; and,

WHEREAS, the University of Florida Student Government is committed to ensuring inclusivity among all students by working toward making the campus community more culturally aware; and,

WHEREAS, as of 2022, 6.3% of enrollment at the University of Florida is comprised of Black or African American students [5]; now,

THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate recognizes it is crucial to acknowledge the ongoing struggle against systemic racism, inequality, and injustice that African Americans face, drawing inspiration from figures such as Harriet Tubman, Frederick Douglass, Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X, and contemporary activists who have fought and continue to fight for freedom, equality, and justice.

THEREFORE, LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate recognizes the ongoing fight against systemic racism, inequality, and injustice that African Americans have faced and continue to face at the University of Florida.

THEREFORE, LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate encourages the university administration to continue efforts to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives through increasing the recruitment and retention of Black faculty and staff, expanding curriculum that highlights Black history and culture, and providing resources and support for Black student organizations.

THEREFORE, LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate calls upon all students, faculty, and staff to actively engage in conversations and actions that challenge racism, discrimination, and prejudice in all its forms, both on campus and in the broader community.

THEREFORE, LET IT FINALLY BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate designates the month of February as a time to not only commemorate the achievements and contributions of African Americans throughout history but also to reflect on the work that still needs to be done to achieve racial equity and justice for all.

Proviso: A copy of this resolution shall be sent to University of Florida Student Body President Olivia Green, University of Florida President Benjamin Sasse, Multicultural and Diversity Affairs Senior Director Dr. Marsha McGriff, Black Student Engagement Program Director Satcha Sanon, Vice President of Student Affairs Dr. Heather White, and Black Student Union President Laura Thomas.

[1] <https://guides.loc.gov/black-history-month-legal-resources/history-and-overview>

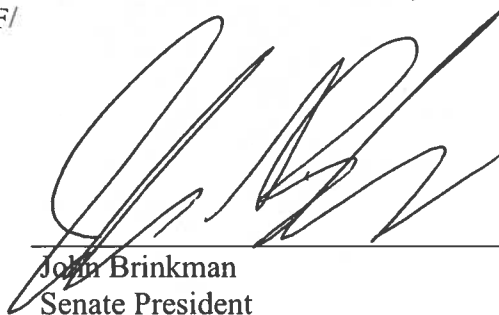
[2] [https://naacp.org/find-resources/history-explained/civil-rights-leaders/carter-g-woodson#:~:text=African%20American%20History,-](https://naacp.org/find-resources/history-explained/civil-rights-leaders/carter-g-woodson#:~:text=African%20American%20History,-,Black%20History%20Month,expanded%20into%20Black%20History%20Month.)

[,Black%20History%20Month,expanded%20into%20Black%20History%20Month.](https://naacp.org/find-resources/history-explained/civil-rights-leaders/carter-g-woodson#:~:text=African%20American%20History,-,Black%20History%20Month,expanded%20into%20Black%20History%20Month.)

[3] <https://news.lib.wvu.edu/2015/08/03/carter-g-woodson-the-father-of-black-history/>

[4] <https://exhibits.uflib.ufl.edu/BlackThursdayUF/>

[5] <https://ir.aa.ufl.edu/facts/enrollment/>



John Brinkman
Senate President

3/1/2024
Date