

Committee Substitute for Senate Bill No. 464

An act relating to legal holidays and special observances; creating s. 683.26, F.S.; designating February 6 as “Ronald Reagan Day”; authorizing the Governor to issue proclamations commemorating the occasion; creating s. 683.33, F.S.; designating January 6 as “Three Kings Day” and authorizing local governments to issue proclamations commemorating the occasion; providing an effective date.

WHEREAS, President Ronald Wilson Reagan, a man of humble background, worked throughout his life serving freedom and advancing the public good, having distinguished himself during his professional life as an entertainer, union leader, and corporate spokesman before being elected Governor of California and then President of the United States of America, and

WHEREAS, Ronald Reagan served with honor and distinction for two terms as the 40th President of the United States of America, earning the distinction of being elected to his second term of office by three-fifths of the electorate and by 49 of the 50 states in the union, a record unsurpassed in the history of American presidential elections, and

WHEREAS, in 1981, when Ronald Reagan was inaugurated as President, he inherited a disillusioned nation that was shackled by rampant inflation and high unemployment, and

WHEREAS, despite the difficult circumstances he inherited, Ronald Reagan’s approach to leading the nation was to exemplify an unwavering faith in American ideals, most memorably by invoking his long-held vision of America as “a shining city on a hill,” destined to realize an ever brighter future, and

WHEREAS, during his presidency, Ronald Reagan worked in a bipartisan manner to enact his bold agenda of restoring accountability and common sense to the Federal Government, which led to an unprecedented economic expansion and opportunity for millions of Americans, and

WHEREAS, President Reagan’s commitment to an active social policy agenda for the nation’s children helped to lower crime and reduce drug use in our neighborhoods, and

WHEREAS, President Reagan’s commitment to our armed forces contributed to the restoration of pride in America and its values and those cherished by the free world and prepared the nation’s armed forces to meet the challenges of the 21st century, and

WHEREAS, President Reagan’s vision of “peace through strength” led to the end of the Cold War and the ultimate demise of the Soviet Union, thus guaranteeing basic human rights for millions of people, and

WHEREAS, February 6, 2007, was the 96th anniversary of Ronald Reagan’s birth, and June 5, 2007, will mark the third anniversary of his passing,

which generated an outpouring of love and respect unprecedented in a generation, and

WHEREAS, the Hispanic history of this state began in 1513 when Ponce de Leon arrived in the land he called La Pascua Florida, and

WHEREAS, this Hispanic history of the state was strengthened when, in 1565, Pedro Menendez de Aviles founded San Augustin, or St. Augustine, the first permanent European settlement in what is now the United States, and

WHEREAS, Florida was a Spanish colony for almost 300 years, except for a 20-year period between 1763 and 1783, until the Adams-Onis Treaty ceded Florida to the United States in 1821, and

WHEREAS, Hispanic people have remained in Florida since it was a Spanish colony, and

WHEREAS, Hispanic food, traditions, and culture have contributed greatly to the state in the past, and

WHEREAS, the Hispanic population of Florida has grown substantially in recent history by immigration and, as a result, the Hispanic population continues to influence the food, traditions, and culture of Florida, and

WHEREAS, El Dia de los Reyes Magos, or “Three Kings Day,” is a day that has not only religious meaning for many Hispanics but is also a day that has deep cultural roots that encourage extended families and friends to visit each other and enjoy each other’s company, to celebrate, and to exchange gifts, NOW, THEREFORE,

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Section 683.26, Florida Statutes, is created to read:

683.26 Ronald Reagan Day.—

(1) February 6 of each year is designated as “Ronald Reagan Day.”

(2) The Governor may issue annually a proclamation designating February 6 as “Ronald Reagan Day.” Public officials, schools, private organizations, and all citizens are encouraged to honor the legacy of opportunity and optimism left by America’s 40th President by commemorating Ronald Reagan Day on February 6 of each year.

Section 2. Section 683.33, Florida Statutes, is created to read:

683.33 Three Kings Day.—

(1) January 6 of each year is designated as “Three Kings Day.”

(2) Local governments may annually issue a proclamation commemorating January 6 as “Three Kings Day” and recognize that many residents of

the state celebrate the occasion as a time to be with their family and friends, attend services, exchange gifts, and celebrate their cultural heritage.

Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2007.

Approved by the Governor May 22, 2007.

Filed in Office Secretary of State May 22, 2007.