

By Senator Thrasher

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Senate Resolution

A resolution recognizing Associated Industries of Florida on the occasion of its 90th Anniversary.

WHEREAS, the Duval County Employers' Association was established in 1920 for the purpose of defending and promoting the free enterprise system, and

WHEREAS, business owners and managers from other parts of the state joined the association, and, in 1923, the membership changed its name to the Florida Employers' Association in recognition of its changed demographics, and

WHEREAS, in 1930, the association changed its name one last time, incorporating as Associated Industries of Florida (AIF), and

WHEREAS, in the 1940s, the association initiated innovative programs to enhance the business community's participation in the political process, interviewing candidates for office and sending them questionnaires asking their views on a wide range of issues, developing an agenda of legislative priorities for the legislative session, and taking a proactive stance in the development of responses to issues of importance to the business community and, therefore, the state, and

WHEREAS, the 1950s saw the association develop newsletters and a legislative directory to encourage and equip Florida employers to become more involved in the state political process by building personal relationships with legislators in order to help them better understand the problems facing industry, and

WHEREAS, in 1951, the association broadened its base by becoming the state affiliate of the National Association of

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30 Manufacturers and, in 1953, moved its headquarters to
31 Tallahassee to allow the association to better represent its
32 members before state government, and

33 WHEREAS, in 1974, the association formed the Florida
34 business community's first political action committee, known
35 today as the Associated Industries of Florida Political Action
36 Committee, to support candidates deemed appreciative of the need
37 for a vibrant and secure free enterprise system, and

38 WHEREAS, in 1991, the association developed one of the
39 state's first online legislative information systems, the
40 Florida Business Network, to provide electronic tracking and
41 reporting on the legislative process, and, in 1994, created the
42 Florida Business United Network to electronically track and
43 report on candidates, voting records, contributions, and other
44 political information, and

45 WHEREAS, in 1992, Associated Industries of Florida became
46 the first business association to form a political operations
47 department, concentrating on political strategy and polling,
48 and, in 1994, created the first full-service political
49 organization for business in the Sunshine State, the AIF
50 Political Council, which developed an intensive political
51 profile, questionnaire, and interview process for candidates
52 that is still considered the "gold standard," and

53 WHEREAS, in 1999, Associated Industries of Florida
54 developed a revolutionary data-gathering instrument dubbed Total
55 View Equation, which analyzes the state's legislative districts
56 based on 160 categories of information, and

57 WHEREAS, in the 2000s, the association has continued to
58 forge new alliances and strengthen its ties with business owners

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59 and state, national, and international business groups, while
60 enhancing its governmental affairs initiatives with the
61 development of new industry councils that address the myriad
62 issues affecting specific segments of the business community,
63 and

64 WHEREAS, over the course of its rich history, Associated
65 Industries of Florida has been actively involved in every major
66 legislative initiative related to the business community,
67 working tirelessly to ensure that government officials
68 understand the effect of their decisions on the business
69 community, and earning the title, "The Voice of Florida
70 Business," and

71 WHEREAS, the association and its members have given
72 generously to this state through their support of and service to
73 community organizations and private associations, including the
74 American Red Cross, the United Way, Foundation USA, Communities
75 in Schools, the Florida Economics Club, and the Broward
76 Partnership for the Homeless, NOW, THEREFORE,

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

79
80 That Associated Industries of Florida is congratulated on
81 the occasion of its 90th Anniversary and commended for its many
82 years of service to the business community and its contribution
83 to the political process.