

1 A RESOLUTION honoring the Cuban American Association of Kentucky.

2 WHEREAS, the Cuban American Association of Kentucky is led by grateful Cuban
3 Americans Berta Weyenberg (president), Luis David Fuentes (vice president), and board
4 members Orlando Grimany, Oscar Puig, María Teresa Rodríguez, Darien Barrios, Irina
5 Baptiste, Diego Leyva, and Dania Marzo Santiesteban; and

6 WHEREAS, the Cuban American Association of Kentucky is a nonprofit
7 organization formed to represent the Cuban American community in our Commonwealth;
8 and

9 WHEREAS, the mission of the Cuban American Association of Kentucky is to
10 educate and empower the growing Cuban community of Kentucky, promote self-
11 sufficiency and a successful integration into the community, advocate for freedom and
12 democracy in Cuba, and defend and recognize the values of the United States of America,
13 the members' second home; and

14 WHEREAS, during the Covid-19 pandemic, the Cuban American Association of
15 Kentucky was the first organization providing Spanish translation of the Governor's daily
16 updates, reaching thousands of Spanish speaking-residents every day; and

17 WHEREAS, the Cuban American Association of Kentucky has organized and held
18 13 food drives serving families in distress, and in the last five years, the Association has
19 hosted multiple educational seminars for newly arrived refugees; and

20 WHEREAS, on February 11, 2023, over 80 Cuban health professionals participated
21 in a networking event to learn how to obtain professional credentials in the United States
22 and how to re-enter the medical field; and

23 WHEREAS, the Cuban American Association of Kentucky is advocating for an
24 employment authorization that would allow the new arrivals to work, which, in return,
25 will help with the shortage of workers, especially in the health and education fields; and

26 WHEREAS, currently, the Cuban American Association of Kentucky is actively
27 working with Kentucky Refugee Ministries and other local organizations facilitating the

1 community integration of the new Cuban Americans entering the Commonwealth; and

2 WHEREAS, the Cuban American Association of Kentucky regularly promotes
3 civic events at the bust of Jose Marti, who is often referred to as the "Apostle of Cuban
4 Independence." The bust is located at Shively Park in Jefferson County and was donated
5 in 1955 by the Cuban President Fulgencio Batista "as a tribute to the valiant Kentuckians
6 who fought for the liberation of Cuba"; and

7 WHEREAS, the ruling party in Cuba has deprived many residents of the freedom to
8 live a life absent of domestic strife and the threat of retaliation for vocal disagreement,
9 creating a system for prolonged relocation out of Cuba to the United States; and

10 WHEREAS, Kentucky has provided a safe and democratic environment that
11 empowers the Cuban community through freedoms of expression, education, and
12 economic opportunity; and

13 WHEREAS, the Commonwealth of Kentucky currently is home to a large Cuban
14 American community of over 45,000 proud Cubanos; and

15 WHEREAS, Cubans have chosen to settle in almost every major town in the
16 Commonwealth, from Paducah in the west to Covington in the northeast, and nearly 8
17 percent of Kentucky's foreign-born population is from Cuba; and

18 WHEREAS, the Cuban community is most visible in Louisville's Jefferson County,
19 which ranks 12th in the country when it comes to total Cuban population; and

20 WHEREAS, in 2022, the Senate adopted a Resolution expressing the condemnation
21 of any unjust practices and violations of human rights against the people of Cuba, and
22 their families, domestic and abroad; and

23 WHEREAS, that Resolution also expressed that the Kentucky Senate stands for
24 equality for all, and against any and all restrictions on free speech and related freedoms;
25 and

26 WHEREAS, the Kentucky State Senate recognizes the sacrifices, sadness, and loss
27 that come with leaving your homeland and families, but is extremely honored by those

1 who have chosen the Commonwealth as the place in which to pursue their American
2 dream;

3 NOW, THEREFORE,

4 *Be it resolved by the Senate of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of*
5 *Kentucky:*

6 ➔Section 1. The members of the Senate hereby honor the Cuban American
7 Association of Kentucky and recognize the important work it does in supporting Cuban
8 American communities within the Commonwealth.

9 ➔Section 2. The Clerk of the Senate is directed to transmit a copy of this
10 Resolution to Senator Michael J. Nemes for presentation to the Cuban American
11 Association of Kentucky.