A bill to be entitled

An act relating to the Florida Museum of History; authorizing the Department of State to partner with certain county commissions and local entities for a specified purpose; requiring each Florida Museum of History to be owned, managed, and operated by a certain entity; establishing the Florida Museum of History Advisory Committee; providing membership and duties of the committee; requiring each county commission and local entity to create a Florida Museum of History Board; providing for membership and duties of the operating board; requiring that certain entities develop and execute a marketing plan to promote each Florida Museum of History; requiring financial feasibility studies; providing for funding from specific sources for certain purposes; providing requirements for the Florida Museum of History; providing an effective date.

WHEREAS, in 2023, the Legislature established the Florida Museum of Black History Task Force to identify, evaluate, and recommend potential locations for a leading world-class museum dedicated to preserving, interpreting, and celebrating the history, culture, and contributions of Black Floridians and Black Americans, and

WHEREAS, the task force received applications from multiple jurisdictions and, in April 2024, adopted previously developed rankings that narrowed the field from thirteen potential sites to three: Eatonville in Orange County, St. Augustine in St. Johns County, and Opa-locka in Miami-Dade County, and

WHEREAS, due to limited resources, incomplete data, and a narrowing legislative deadline, the task force reaffirmed these rankings without conducting new feasibility, financial, or comparative analyses of the three potential sites, and

WHEREAS, the task force voted on May 21, 2024, to recommend St. Augustine in St. Johns County as the site for the future Florida Museum of Black History, and

WHEREAS, on June 30, 2024, the Division of Historical Resources, with input from the task force, issued a report describing the recommendation as a preliminary roadmap and requesting additional legislative funding to support feasibility and economic impact studies for each of the three top-ranked locations, and

WHEREAS, the Legislature recognizes that the task force found no location with a clearly superior feasibility or sustainability profile, underscoring the need for a comprehensive, data-driven study before a final designation, and

WHEREAS, it is the intent of the Legislature that comprehensive feasibility and economic impact studies be completed and reviewed for the three top-ranked locations in Orange County, St. Augustine in St. Johns County, and Opa-locka in Miami-Dade County before any final site designation, construction authorization, or allocation of state funds, and

WHEREAS, these studies shall evaluate visitation potential, infrastructure readiness, financial sustainability, and the demonstrated capacity of each locality to provide at least a 50 percent local funding match through public, philanthropic, or private sources, and

WHEREAS, a world-class museum is characterized by its extraordinary collection of historical items and a thoughtfully curated visitor experience, and

WHEREAS, these institutions serve as vital repositories of our shared heritage, actively shaping our understanding of the past, present, and future, and

WHEREAS, a world-class museum is not defined by a big building or a famous name, but is an unparalleled combination of an extraordinary and meticulously preserved collection and an unforgettable, thoughtfully curated visitor experience that transcends mere viewing, inviting deep engagement and reflection, and

WHEREAS, the Florida Museum of History is intended to be more than a museum about slavery and the Civil Rights Movement in America, and

WHEREAS, the Florida Museum of History is envisioned as a unifying, cultural, and educational institution of statewide significance, with the capacity to advance understanding, unity, and economic opportunity for residents and visitors alike, and

WHEREAS, establishing and sustaining the Florida Museum of History will require a shared commitment from state, local, and private partners, and

WHEREAS, at least 50 percent of total project funding should come from local and regional public, philanthropic, and private sources to ensure community ownership and fiscal balance, and

WHEREAS, the Legislature finds that this partnership structure, balancing state investment with strong local commitment, is essential to ensure that the museum's establishment is both equitable and fiscally responsible, and

WHEREAS, it is the intent of the Legislature that the Florida Museum of History operate as a statewide institution with collaborative governance that reflects Florida's geographic and cultural diversity and fosters partnerships among local governments, educational

institutions, and cultural organizations throughout the state, and

WHEREAS, the Legislature reaffirms its commitment to supporting a museum that honors the history and achievements of Black Floridians, advances public understanding, stimulates tourism and economic opportunity, and stands as a lasting symbol of unity and progress for future generations, NOW, THEREFORE,

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

Section 1. (1) The Department of State may partner with the county commissions of Orange, St. Johns, and Miami-Dade Counties, and each local entity designated by the commissions to design, construct, operate, and manage Florida Museums of History in Orange, St. Johns, and Miami-Dade Counties. Once constructed, each Florida Museum of History must be owned, managed, and operated by the local entity designated by the respective county commission.

(2)(a) The Florida Museum of History Advisory Committee, a committee as defined in s. 20.03, Florida Statutes, is created within the Department of State to guide and assist with planning, designing, and constructing each Florida Museum of History. Except as otherwise provided in this section, the committee shall operate in a manner consistent with s. 20.052,

Florida Statutes.

(b) The Florida Museum of History Advisory Committee shall consist of the following members, who must have expertise in Florida history, Black History, curation, architecture, and museum design:

1. One member appointed by the Governor.

2. One member appointed by the President of the Senate.

3. One member appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

4. One member appointed by the Secretary of the Department of State.

5. The executive director of the Florida Tourism Industry Marketing Corporation.

6. The chair and vice chair of the Florida Legislative Black Caucus, who are not required to have expertise in Florida history, Black History, curation, architecture, and museum design. The chair and vice chair of the Florida Legislative Black Caucus, in lieu of serving on the Florida Museum of History Advisory Committee, may each appoint one person who has expertise in Black History, Florida history, curation, architecture, and museum design to serve on the Florida Museum of History Advisory Committee.

(c) The Florida Museum of History Advisory Committee, in partnership with each designated local entity, shall provide guidance and direction in choosing the architects, museum

designers, curators, and other contractors to design, construct, operate, and manage each Florida Museum of History. To that end, such local entities shall:

1. Procure architectural design services.

2. Procure construction management services based upon the final architectural designs and construction budgets.

3. Provide recommendations for the operation and administration of the museums.

4. Ensure that each museum is operated as a hybrid model by a nonprofit entity in combination with the respective county commission, which may include a state agency, a local governmental entity, or a college or university.

5. Consider relevant operational models, including the:

a. Avron B. Fogelman Sports Museum in Boca Raton.

b. Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History in Detroit, Michigan.

c. Florida Museum of Natural History in Gainesville.

e. Harvey B. Gantt Center for African American Arts and Culture in Charlotte, North Carolina.

f. John & Mable Ringling Museum of Art in Sarasota.

g. Meek-Eaton Black Archives, Research Center and Museum in Tallahassee.

h. Museum of Florida History in Tallahassee.

i. National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis, Tennessee.

j. Patricia & Phillip Frost Art Museum in Miami.

6. Develop a collections management policy to care for, preserve, and curate the museums' collections as well as collections that may be loaned to the museums.

7. Develop and maintain curatorial policies and practices consistent with generally accepted professional museum standards, including collections management, exhibition development, research, and interpretation. Qualified professionals shall make curatorial decisions in accordance with such standards and applicable law. Oversight by governing bodies shall apply only to matters of fiscal accountability, public transparency, and compliance with state requirements. Such oversight shall not extend to the review, approval, or direction of specific curatorial content, exhibitions, or interpretive materials.

(d) The Florida Museum of History Advisory Committee shall make recommendations that include educational materials relating to the role of African American participation in defending and preserving this state and the United States, including the contributions of the residents of Fort Mose, the Tuskegee Airmen, and African-American veterans.

(3)(a) Each county commission, in partnership with the designated local entity, must create a Florida Museum of History Board for each museum in Orange, St. Johns, and Miami-Dade Counties. Each county commission, in partnership with the designated local entity, shall appoint no more than 11 members

to the board governing that museum. Each member must have experience in at least one of the following areas:

1. Florida History or Black History;

2. Museum curation;

3. Architecture;

4. Museum design; or

5. Philanthropy.

(b) Each Florida Museum of History Board shall appoint an operating board of directors, consisting of scholarly experts and other key stakeholders representing community organizations, to provide program support for each museum.

(4) Each Florida Museum of History Board, in consultation with the respective county commission, shall:

(a) Develop a plan for the museum to acquire archival materials and artifacts.

(b) Develop plans for permanent and temporary exhibitions in consultation with colleagues from other institutions and external content experts.

(c) Develop programs and educational materials, including topics that support the mission of the Florida Museum of History, in consultation with the Department of Education and other external stakeholders.

(d) Provide educational materials that complement and support required history instruction provided in public schools in accordance with s. 1003.42(2)(h), Florida Statutes.

(e) Create a transition plan for the museum to become financially self-sufficient.

(5) The Florida Museum of History Advisory Committee, in partnership with the designated local entities, the Florida Tourism Marketing Corporation, and the local visitor and convention bureaus, shall develop and execute a marketing plan to promote each Florida Museum of History. The designated local entities may collaborate with local destination marketing organizations or convention and visitors bureaus.

Section 2. (1) The Legislature shall provide at least $1 million each to the county commissions of Orange, St. Johns, and Miami-Dade Counties to conduct a financial feasibility study for each respective Florida Museum of History location. In each such location, the financial feasibility study shall:

(a) Evaluate the visitation potential, infrastructure readiness, and financial sustainability of the area.

(b) Evaluate each location's capacity to match at least 50 percent of funding provided by the Legislature, using public, philanthropic, or private sources.

(c) Assess the likelihood that the location will become financially self-sufficient within 3 years after the museum's opening, without additional financial support from the Legislature.

(d) Be used to determine the appropriate size and the square footage of the museums for each respective location based

on tourism markets, funding capacity, funding availability, operational sustainability, and ensure adequate capacity for robust programming and future expansion.

(2)(a) The construction of each Florida Museum of History shall be funded by both local and state appropriations.

(b) The Legislature shall appropriate no more than $75 million for the construction of the Florida Museums of History. Each location may qualify for up to one-third of the funds provided by the state.

(c) Each county commission, in partnership with its designated local entity, shall match at least 50 percent of funding provided by the Legislature, using public, philanthropic, or private sources.

(d) Estimates for recurring operational costs shall be developed during the building design, site development, and construction process.

(e) In addition to receiving funds as set forth in paragraph (a), the Florida Museum of History Board shall seek to raise private funds, gifts, donations, and solicit grants, to augment any recurring funding received. The museum shall earn revenue from general admission fees, ticketed programming and events, retail partnerships, and facility rentals. An endowment shall be created to support the acquisition, research, and care of collections obtained from across the network of museums that exist in this state.

Section 3. (1) The Florida Museum of History is intended to be a leading world-class cultural arts and history museum, and must consist of:

(a) At least 10,000 square feet of exhibition space capable of supporting all the functions of a leading world-class museum, including collections care and storage, exhibits, programs, large public events, large rental events, and a repository for genealogical and archival materials with appropriate space for public research.

(b) An archival and storage facility for items donated to the Florida Museum of History at each location, as well as historical documents and items and educational materials.

(2) Each Florida Museum of History Board must ensure that at least 33 percent of the museum's exhibition space is dedicated to the history of this state, including:

(a) The history and impact of tourism, including attractions, historical sites, and tourist destinations such as Disney World, Silver Springs, Universal Studios, and this state's beaches.

(b) The history and presence of the United States military, including military bases and installations in the state.

(c) The history and impact of agriculture on the state's economy.

(d) The history of space exploration and the impact of the

National Aeronautics and Space Administration and related activities on this state.

(3) Each Florida Museum of History Board must consider creating exhibition halls and spaces for:

(a) Florida's African American museums.

(b) Florida's Hispanic museums.

(c) Florida's Jewish Holocaust museums.

(d) African Americans in the military.

(e) African Americans and women in aviation.

(f) African Americans and women in space.

(g) The history of slavery and the Civil Rights Movement in this state and the United States.

(h) An exhibition hall of life-sized statues or a statue garden of significant individuals in the history of this state and the United States.

(i) A library and archives of this state's Governors to include 3D-printed life-sized statues of the Governors.

(j) A Presidential Hall of Statues.

(k) The history of the Civil War in this state.

(l) The history of reconstruction in this state.

(m) The impact of Henry Morrison Flagler in this state.

(n) A portrait gallery featuring portraits of historical and significant individuals who have impacted Florida.

(o) The history of Black towns, cities, and settlements in this state.

(p) The history of the migration of the citizens of the Caribbean to this state, including Cubans, Haitians, and Jamaicans.

(q) A portrait gallery and archives of Black and Hispanic elected officials in this state.

(r) The history of Historically Black Colleges and Universities in this state, including the life of Mary McCleod Bethune and Bethune Cookman University, and the United States.

(s) A gallery of Black art that includes paintings, posters, prints, glass works, quilts, and figurines.

(t) The history of Orange County, St. Johns County, or Miami-Dade County.

(u) The history of the Town of Eatonville and author Zora Neale Hurston.

(v) Historically significant and influential persons including artists, musicians, poets, and athletes, and historical events, including Black History events in this state and the United States.

(w) The history of Black entrepreneurs, scientists, inventors and inventions in this state and the United States.

(x) The history of the Tuskegee Airmen and the history of the Tuskegee Airmen in this state.

(y) The history of baseball in this state, including the major leagues, the Negro Baseball League, the minor leagues, and spring training.

(z) The impact of Cuban immigrants in this state.

Section 4. This act shall take effect July 1, 2026.