

HR 8063

2017

1 House Resolution

2 A resolution recognizing August 2017 as "School
3 Backpack Awareness Month" in the State of Florida.

4
5 WHEREAS, overloaded school backpacks are increasingly
6 becoming a serious health risk for students across the nation,
7 and

8 WHEREAS, since spinal ligaments and muscles are not fully
9 developed until after age 16, overloaded school backpacks are a
10 source of repeated low-level stress that may result in chronic
11 neck, shoulder, or back pain in children, and

12 WHEREAS, according to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety
13 Commission, more than 7,000 emergency room visits each year are
14 due to school backpack-related injuries, and

15 WHEREAS, in 2010 alone, physicians' offices, clinics, and
16 hospital emergency rooms treated nearly 28,000 strains, sprains,
17 dislocations, and fractures resulting from improperly worn or
18 overloaded school backpacks, and

19 WHEREAS, studies have shown heavy loads carried on the back
20 have the potential to damage the soft tissues of the shoulder,
21 causing microstructural damage to the nerves and damage to
22 internal organs, and

23 WHEREAS, studies have shown an increase in curvatures of
24 the spine and compressed intervertebral height when a school
25 backpack exceeds 10 percent of a child's body weight, and

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26 WHEREAS, the Global Burden of Disease Study of 2010 showed
27 low back pain as the number one cause of disability worldwide,
28 while musculoskeletal disorders were the second cause, and

29 WHEREAS, children's textbooks are much heavier now than
30 many years ago, and in addition to textbooks, students often
31 carry computers, cell phones, water bottles, running shoes, band
32 instruments, and other equipment considered essential to have
33 readily available, and

34 WHEREAS, more than 90 percent of students carry school
35 backpacks, which, in studies, have been found to weigh as much
36 as 25 percent of the child's body weight, and

37 WHEREAS, school backpacks are often not worn correctly,
38 often slung over one shoulder or allowed to hang significantly
39 below the waistline, increasing the weight on the shoulders and
40 making the child lean forward when walking or stoop forward when
41 standing to compensate for the extra weight, NOW, THEREFORE,

42
43 Be It Resolved by the House of Representatives of the State of
44 Florida:

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46 That August 2017 is recognized as "School Backpack
47 Awareness Month" in the State of Florida to promote awareness of
48 the potentially serious and damaging long-term health effects of
49 carrying overloaded or improperly worn school backpacks.

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50 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that school districts across the
51 state are encouraged to educate students, parents, and their
52 personnel, in collaboration with community-based organizations
53 and parent-teacher associations, regarding the health risks of
54 wearing an overloaded school backpack and the ways in which
55 students may properly load and wear their school backpacks.
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