



RICK SCOTT
GOVERNOR

499th ANNIVERSARY OF THE FIRST EUROPEAN ARRIVAL IN FLORIDA

WHEREAS, the European landing in Florida by Spanish explorer Ponce de León occurred in 1513, on or around April 2; and

WHEREAS, Ponce de León named the land *La Florida* because of its lush plant life and in honor of Pascua Florida, the Eastertime Spanish Feast of Flowers taking place at the time of his arrival; and

WHEREAS, in 1953, April 2 was designated by the Florida Legislature as State Day in honor of Ponce de León's discovery; and

WHEREAS, Ponce de León's landing in Florida was the first recorded European exploration of the continental United States of America, predating the European arrival in every other American state; and

WHEREAS, prior to the arrival of Ponce de León, many native peoples inhabited the land he called *La Florida*; and

WHEREAS, Ponce de León's expedition included people of diverse culture and ancestry; and

WHEREAS, it is important to recognize the contributions of everyone who has contributed to Florida's heritage; and

WHEREAS, the anniversary of Ponce de León's landing is an appropriate time to consider Spain's influence on Florida's dynamic culture, rich diversity and economic prosperity; and

WHEREAS, on April 2, 2013, Florida will have seen 500 years of European influence, which will be commemorated under the statewide initiative, Viva Florida 500.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Rick Scott, Governor of the State of Florida, do hereby extend greetings and best wishes to all observing April 2, 2012 as the **499th Anniversary of the European Discovery of Florida**.



IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the Great State of Florida to be affixed at Tallahassee, the Capital, this 2nd day of April, in the year two thousand twelve.


Governor