

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA

SESSION 1993

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HOUSE BILL 318

Short Title: Adopt Watermelon Festival.

(Public)

Sponsors: Representatives James; H. Hunter, Rogers, and R. Thompson..

Referred to: Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House.

February 25, 1993

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1 AN ACT TO ADOPT THE HERTFORD COUNTY WATERMELON FESTIVAL AS
2 THE NORTH CAROLINA WATERMELON FESTIVAL AND TO DECLARE
3 THAT THE FESTIVAL BE HELD ANNUALLY.
4

5 Whereas, watermelon farming has been a successful vocation of some
6 Hertford County farmers for generations; and

7 Whereas, the watermelon industry has been and continues to be an important
8 part of the State's economy; and

9 Whereas, the late George T. Underwood of Hertford County was one of the
10 first farmers to grow watermelons in northeastern North Carolina and was responsible
11 for promoting much of the interest in growing watermelons in Hertford County; and

12 Whereas, there are as many as 700 to 1,000 acres of watermelons grown in
13 northeastern North Carolina each year; and

14 Whereas, since 1986, an annual watermelon festival has been held in Hertford
15 County; and

16 Whereas, this festival began as a one-half day event and has grown into a
17 four-day celebration; and

18 Whereas, in 1992, the Hertford County Watermelon Festival attracted 12,000
19 visitors; and

20 Whereas, the festival provides participants of all ages with a wide variety of
21 entertainment including parades, amusement rides, historic tours, dances, and contests;
22 and

23 Whereas, the festival allows local crafters and vendors the chance to promote
24 their goods to a large number of people; and

1 Whereas, adopting the Hertford County Watermelon Festival as the North
2 Carolina Watermelon Festival will help to promote agriculture, tourism and economic
3 growth, and the exchange of cultural ideas; Now, therefore,
4 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

5 Section 1. Chapter 145 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new
6 section to read:

7 **"§ 145-16. State Watermelon Festival.**

8 (a) The Hertford County Watermelon Festival is adopted as the official North
9 Carolina Watermelon Festival. The festival may be held in Hertford County. The
10 festival shall be observed annually during the last four days of the first week in August.

11 (b) Nothing in this section shall be construed to obligate the General Assembly to
12 appropriate funds to implement the provisions of this section.

13 (c) Nothing in this section shall be construed to obligate Hertford County to
14 expend funds for the purposes of this section."

15 Sec. 2. This act is effective upon ratification.