

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA

SESSION 1993

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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 1252

Sponsors: Senators Martin of Guilford; Seymour and Shaw.

Referred to: Calendar 6/29/93.

June 28, 1993

1 A JOINT RESOLUTION HONORING THE LIFE AND MEMORY OF WARMOUTH
2 THOMAS GIBBS.

3 Whereas, Warmouth Thomas Gibbs was born in Baldwin, Louisiana, on April
4 5, 1892, to Alice Tolliver Gibbs and Thomas Dorsey Gibbs; and

5 Whereas, Warmouth Thomas Gibbs experienced a childhood that he
6 acknowledged had a tremendous influence on him; a childhood personified by a triangle
7 the sides of which were home, church, and school; and

8 Whereas, during his childhood he attended the same school from which his
9 parents and all his five brothers and sisters graduated, Gilbert Academy, an institution
10 that doubled as a school and an orphanage; and

11 Whereas, his academic capabilities and social sensibilities were revealed
12 early, as evidence of which in the sixth grade, he authored an essay entitled "The
13 Obligations of the American Negro to the People of Africa" that won him an award
14 from the Methodist Foreign Missionary Society headquartered in the Gammon School
15 of Theology in Atlanta, Georgia; and

16 Whereas, Warmouth Thomas Gibbs earned an A.B. degree in Liberal Arts
17 from Wiley College in Marshall, Texas, in 1912 and was Valedictorian of his
18 graduating class; he earned an A.B. degree in History and Political Science from
19 Harvard College in 1917; and he earned an Ed.M. degree in Education and History from
20 Harvard University in 1925; and he engaged in further graduate study at Harvard Law
21 School from 1921 to 1922 and in History and Political Science at Harvard University
22 from 1931 to 1932; and

23 Whereas, Warmouth Thomas Gibbs joined the R.O.T.C. Unit at Harvard
24 College in 1915; the United States declared war on Germany April 6, 1917; the War
25 Department authorized an Officer's Reserve Training Camp for Negro men May 19,
26 1917, to be established at Fort Des Moines, Iowa; and Warmouth Thomas Gibbs,

1 without waiting for graduation, reported for duty June 15, 1917, as a member of the first
2 group, and was commissioned October 15, 1917, as a Second Lieutenant in the United
3 States Army; and

4 Whereas, Lieutenant Gibbs was assigned to the 367th Infantry, 92nd Division
5 and served as part of three engagements in France during 1918; and where, due to his
6 fluency in French, one of his duties was to arrange lodging for soldiers in various
7 French cities; and he received an honorable discharge June 12, 1919; and

8 Whereas, Warmouth Thomas Gibbs married Marece Allen Jones May 23,
9 1918, and three children were born of that union; and Warmouth Thomas Gibbs and
10 Marece Allen Jones Gibbs lived together as a loving couple until her death in 1967; and

11 Whereas, from 1919 to 1920, Warmouth Thomas Gibbs served as one of the
12 first African Americans on the Boston, Massachusetts police force, and from 1920 to
13 1922 served as the second Executive Secretary of the Boston Urban League; and

14 Whereas, fortunately for A & T College and the State of North Carolina,
15 Warmouth Thomas Gibbs chose to dedicate his life to educating students at A & T; and
16 in 1926, he began his career there as Dean of Men and Instructor in Military Science
17 and Tactics; and

18 Whereas, Warmouth Thomas Gibbs later served as Professor of History and
19 Government, Dean of the School of Education and General Studies, Director of Summer
20 School, and from 1955 to 1960 as President, and he guided and shaped the institution as
21 the foundation was being laid for it to become a prominent world-class institution; and

22 Whereas, from his retirement in 1960 until his death, Warmouth Thomas
23 Gibbs was President-Emeritus of A & T College and North Carolina Agricultural and
24 Technical State University; and

25 Whereas, during the period of Warmouth Thomas Gibbs' presidency at A & T
26 College, the first white student was admitted in 1957, A & T College, for the first time,
27 became fully accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, and he
28 presided over the historic role played by the institution and its students in advancing the
29 cause of civil and human rights with the focal point being the Woolworth sit-ins of
30 1960; and

31 Whereas, during the sit-ins of 1960, Warmouth Thomas Gibbs was pressured
32 by State and local elected and appointed officials to keep A & T College students on
33 campus and not to allow them to participate in the demonstrations; his response
34 resounded throughout the nation: "We teach our students how to think, not what to
35 think."; and

36 Whereas, following his retirement as President of A & T College he
37 published the first history of the institution, he remained faithful to that institution and
38 very active in the life of its campus, staff and students; and although he was only one
39 year younger than A & T College (which became North Carolina Agricultural and
40 Technical State University subsequent to the period of his presidency), Warmouth
41 Thomas Gibbs was a participant throughout the celebration of the University's
42 Centennial Year of 1991; and

43 Whereas, Warmouth Thomas Gibbs was an active contributor, board member,
44 and officer of numerous professional, religious, social, community, and business

1 organizations, and received numerous honors and awards, and has had numerous
2 writings published, and was awarded honorary doctorate degrees from Wiley College
3 and A & T College; and

4 Whereas, in his prepared remarks for accepting the 1991 University of North
5 Carolina Board of Governors University Award, Warmouth Thomas Gibbs wrote: "I am
6 glad that I possessed the ability and was given the opportunity to make a contribution to
7 the growth and development of young people who are still making their impact upon
8 society. Today, however, as I look to the future, I see a challenge for the academic
9 community: to prepare students not only for the educational and economic needs of this
10 country but also for the worldwide economy and humanitarian needs."; and

11 Whereas, in acknowledging Warmouth Thomas Gibbs' 87th birthday
12 celebration in April 1979, Governor James B. Hunt, Jr. wrote: "He embraced a
13 philosophy and faith that even though the conditions of the State, nation, and world may
14 be dark and discouraging, he refused to believe that they were hopeless. He has been a
15 soldier in the everlasting struggle of the human race for liberty, justice, and
16 righteousness. He gave the devotion of his heart and soul to the greatest cause of all,
17 helping people."; and

18 Whereas, Warmouth Thomas Gibbs died April 19, 1993, two weeks
19 following his 101st birthday; and

20 Whereas, Warmouth Thomas Gibbs' wife, Marece Allen Jones Gibbs, and his
21 son, Warmouth Thomas Gibbs, Sr., and each of his five siblings predeceased him; and

22 Whereas, Warmouth Thomas Gibbs is survived by his daughter, Marece
23 Elizabeth Gibbs-Moore, his son, Chandler Dorsey Gibbs, twelve grandchildren, and five
24 great-grandchildren, and other relatives, friends, and admirers;

25 Now, therefore, be it resolved by the Senate, the House of Representatives concurring:

26 Section 1. The North Carolina General Assembly honors the memory of
27 Warmouth Thomas Gibbs and expresses the gratitude and appreciation of this State and
28 its citizens for his life and devoted service to North Carolina.

29 Sec. 2. The North Carolina General Assembly extends its deepest sympathy
30 to the family of Warmouth Thomas Gibbs for the loss of their loved one.

31 Sec. 3. The Secretary of State shall transmit a certified copy of this resolution
32 to the family of Warmouth Thomas Gibbs.

33 Sec. 4. This resolution is effective upon ratification.