

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
1997 SESSION
RATIFIED BILL

RESOLUTION 8
SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 211

A JOINT RESOLUTION COMMEMORATING THE MEMORY OF RELIGIOUS LEADERS IN THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA AND NAMING BILLY GRAHAM AS WORLD EVANGELIST.

Whereas, Article I, Section 13, of the Constitution of North Carolina speaks to religious liberty in the State of North Carolina and the right to worship Almighty God; and

Whereas, it is right and proper to recognize and commemorate the memory of all religious leaders who have led in the pursuit and practice of individual worship and thereby strengthening the moral fiber of this State; and

Whereas, Billy Graham was born William Franklin Graham on November 7, 1918, in Charlotte, North Carolina, to William Franklin Graham and Morrow Coffey Graham; and

Whereas, Billy Graham graduated from the Florida Bible Institute, now Trinity College, in 1940, and Wheaton College in 1943; and

Whereas, Billy Graham married Wheaton College classmate, Ruth McCue Bell in 1943, and from their union five children were born: Virginia Leftwich, Anne Morrow, Ruth Bell, William Franklin, and Nelson Edman; and

Whereas, from 1943 to 1945, Billy Graham served as pastor of the First Baptist Church in Western Springs, Illinois, and later joined Youth for Christ International, where he ministered to young people and service personnel from 1945 to 1950; and

Whereas, after World War II, Billy Graham began to preach throughout the United States and Europe, but gained international prominence as an evangelist through a series of crusades that began in 1949; and

Whereas, Billy Graham founded the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association in 1950, which launched his weekly radio program "Hour of Decision"; and

Whereas, Billy Graham has received numerous awards and honorary degrees including the Congressional Gold Medal in 1996, the North Carolina Award for Public Service in 1986, the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1983, the Sylvanus Thayer Award from the United States Military Academy Association of Graduates at West Point in 1972, the International Brotherhood Award from the National Conference of Christians and Jews in 1971, and the Gold Award of the George Washington Carver Memorial Institute in 1964; and

Whereas, Billy Graham has written 17 books, all of which have become best sellers; and

Whereas, Billy Graham has participated in eight presidential inaugurations from the inauguration of President Lyndon B. Johnson through the inauguration of President Bill Clinton in 1997; and

Whereas, Billy Graham's messages have reached over 210 million people in over 185 countries through his crusades, television appearances, and radio programs, making him the most well-known preacher; and

Whereas, over the course of many years, people from all walks of life have sought Billy Graham's counsel; and

Whereas, Billy Graham has distinguished himself as a man of great faith, showing a genuine interest in reaching out to those seeking spiritual guidance; and

Whereas, Billy Graham is admired and respected by millions of people over all the world; and

Whereas, naming Billy Graham as World Evangelist would be a fitting tribute to one of North Carolina's most beloved citizens;

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

Section 1. The General Assembly commemorates the memory of religious leaders in the State of North Carolina and names Billy Graham World Evangelist.

Section 2. The Secretary of State shall transmit a certified copy of this resolution to Billy Graham.

Section 3. This resolution is effective upon ratification.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 1st day of May, 1997.

Dennis A. Wicker
President of the Senate

Harold J. Brubaker
Speaker of the House of Representatives