

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 1999  
RATIFIED BILL

RESOLUTION 3  
HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 1860

A JOINT RESOLUTION COMMEMORATING THE 160TH BIRTHDAY OF THE NORTH CAROLINA STATE CAPITOL AND HONORING THE MEMORY OF DECEASED FORMER MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY WHO SERVED THERE.

Whereas, the North Carolina State Capitol, completed in 1840, is one of the finest and best preserved examples of a major civic building in the Greek Revival style of architecture; and

Whereas, the Capitol is the second such building on its site. A simple, two-story brick State House was built on Union Square between 1792 and 1796; and

Whereas, the State House was enlarged between 1820 and 1824 by State architect William Nichols, and burned in 1831; and

Whereas, the General Assembly of 1832-1833 ordered that a new Capitol be built as an enlarged version of the old State House, a cross-shaped building with a central, domed rotunda; and

Whereas, the Commissioners for Rebuilding the Capitol first employed William Nichols, Jr. to help them prepare plans for the building, and in August of 1833 Nichols was replaced by the distinguished New York architectural firm of Ithiel Town and Alexander Jackson Davis who modified and greatly improved the earlier design, giving the Capitol essentially its present appearance and plan; and

Whereas, David Paton (1801-1882), an Edinburgh-born architect who had worked for noted English architect John Sloan, was hired in September 1834 to superintend construction of the Capitol, and the Capitol was built under Paton's supervision; and

Whereas, most of the architectural details, columns, mouldings, ornamental plasterwork, and the honeysuckle crown atop the dome were carefully patterned after features of particular ancient Greek temples. The exterior columns are Doric in style and modeled after those of the Parthenon. The House of Representatives chamber follows the semicircular plan of a Greek theater and its architectural ornament is in the Corinthian style of the Tower of Winds. The Senate chamber is decorated in the Ionic style of the Erectheum. The only nonclassical parts of the building are two rooms on the third floor which were finished in the Gothic style; and

Whereas, the Capitol is 160 feet from north to south, 140 feet from east to west (including the porticoes), and stands 97½ feet from the base of the rotunda to the crown atop the dome, with exterior walls built of gneiss (a form of granite), quarried in southeastern Raleigh and hauled to the site on the horse-drawn Experimental Railroad, the first railway in North Carolina; and

Whereas, the Capitol was completed in 1840 at a total cost of \$532,682.34, or more than three times the yearly general income of the State at that time; and

Whereas, the Capitol housed all of North Carolina's State government until the 1880s, when the Supreme Court and State Library moved to a new building; and

Whereas, the General Assembly moved to the State Legislative Building in 1963, and the General Assembly wishes to commemorate the memory of deceased former members who served there; and

Whereas, the office of the Governor is still in the State Capitol; Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives, the Senate concurring:

Section 1. The General Assembly commemorates the 160th birthday of the North Carolina State Capitol and honors the memory of all deceased former members of the General Assembly who served there.

Section 2. This resolution is effective upon ratification.  
In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 8th day of June, 2000.

s/ Dennis A. Wicker  
President of the Senate

s/ James B. Black  
Speaker of the House of Representatives