

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA

SESSION 1997

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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 211

Rules and Operations of the Senate Committee Substitute Adopted 4/29/97

Sponsors:

Referred to:

February 20, 1997

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

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

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

10 Whereas, Billy Graham was born William Franklin Graham on November 7,
11 1918, in Charlotte, North Carolina, to William Franklin Graham and Morrow Coffey
12 Graham; and

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

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

18 Whereas, from 1943 to 1945, Billy Graham served as pastor of the First
19 Baptist Church in Western Springs, Illinois, and later joined Youth for Christ
20 International, where he ministered to young people and service personnel from 1945 to
21 1950; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

34 Section 3. This resolution is effective upon ratification.