

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2009

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SENATE BILL 89

Agriculture/Environment/Natural Resources Committee Substitute Adopted 3-5-09

Short Title: Authorize Grandfather Mtn. as State Park.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

February 10, 2009

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1 AN ACT TO AUTHORIZE THE ADDITION OF GRANDFATHER MOUNTAIN STATE
2 PARK TO THE STATE PARKS SYSTEM.
3

4 Whereas, Section 5 of Article XIV of the North Carolina Constitution states that it
5 shall be a proper function of the State of North Carolina to acquire and preserve park,
6 recreational, and scenic areas and, in every other appropriate way, to preserve as a part of the
7 common heritage of this State its open lands and places of beauty; and

8 Whereas, the General Assembly enacted the State Parks Act in 1987, declaring that
9 the State of North Carolina offers unique archaeological, geological, biological, scenic, and
10 recreational resources, and that such resources are part of the heritage of the people of the State
11 to be preserved and managed by those people for their use and for the use of their visitors and
12 descendants; and

13 Whereas, Grandfather Mountain in Watauga, Avery, and Caldwell Counties is
14 known to be nationally significant for its excellent examples of many rare high elevation
15 natural communities and an exemplary assemblage of rare plant and animal species; and

16 Whereas, Grandfather Mountain is an internationally recognized terrestrial
17 ecosystem and is therefore designated as a Biosphere Reserve by the United Nations
18 Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's Programme on Man and the Biosphere; and

19 Whereas, Grandfather Mountain is one of the most biologically diverse and
20 significant sites in the Southern Appalachian region; and

21 Whereas, rare species found at Grandfather Mountain include Spreading avens,
22 Roan Mountain bluet, Heller's blazing star, Blue Ridge goldenrod, Virginia big-eared bat,
23 Carolina northern flying squirrel, the Spruce-fir moss spider, and many others; and

24 Whereas, Grandfather Mountain is also one of North Carolina's most important
25 scenic landmarks and offers outstanding opportunities for wilderness recreation; and

26 Whereas, Grandfather Mountain has been found to possess geological, biological,
27 and scenic resources of statewide significance; and

28 Whereas, the Council of State approved the purchase of Grandfather Mountain, to
29 be operated as a State Park, and the Joint Legislative Commission on Governmental Operations
30 approved the report of the State Property Office regarding acquisition of Grandfather Mountain
31 by the State; and

32 Whereas, the proposal is for the acquisition of Grandfather Mountain to be funded
33 through the Natural Heritage Trust Fund and the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund; Now,
34 therefore,

35 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:



1 **SECTION 1.** The General Assembly authorizes the Department of Environment
2 and Natural Resources to add Grandfather Mountain to the State Parks System as provided in
3 G.S. 113-44.14(b).

4 **SECTION 2.** The State shall purchase Grandfather Mountain with existing funds
5 in the Natural Heritage Trust Fund and the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund, as previously
6 approved by the Council of State and the Joint Legislative Commission on Governmental
7 Operations. During the 2009-2011 fiscal biennium, the Department of Environment and
8 Natural Resources shall, with funds available, operate Grandfather Mountain State Park.

9 **SECTION 3.** This act is effective when it becomes law.