

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA

SESSION 1989

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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 2408

Sponsors: Representatives Church; Albertson, Anderson, Balmer, Barbee, Barnes, Barnhill, Beall, Blue, Bowen, Bowie, Burke, Chapin, Colton, Cooper, J. Crawford, N. Crawford, Creech, Cunningham, Dawkins, DeVane, Diamont, Easterling, Edwards, B. Ethridge, Fitch, Fletcher, Foster, Fussell, Green, Greenwood, Hackney, Hall, Hardaway, Hasty, Holt, Jack Hunt, Judy Hunt, Sam Hunt, H. Hunter, R. Hunter, James, Jones, Kennedy, Kerr, Lilley, Lineberry, Locks, Lutz, McLaughlin, Mercer, Michaux, Miller, Mills, Nesbitt, Nye, Payne, Perdue, Ramsey, Redwine, Rogers, Sizemore, Stamey, Stewart, Tart, R. Thompson, S. Thompson, Warner, Warren, Wicker, G. Wilson, Wisner, and Woodard.

Referred to:

July 11, 1990

1 A JOINT RESOLUTION HONORING THE LIFE AND MEMORY OF WILLIAM T.
2 "BILLY" WATKINS.

3 Whereas, William T. "Billy" Watkins was born in Granville County, July 1,
4 1921, to John Stradley and Belle (Norwood) Watkins; and

5 Whereas, William T. "Billy" Watkins was educated at Oak Hill High School,
6 Mars Hill Junior College, Wake Forest College, and Wake Forest Law School; and

7 Whereas, William T. "Billy" Watkins practiced law in the Town of Oxford
8 and followed his father's and brother's footsteps by serving in the North Carolina
9 General Assembly; and

10 Whereas, William T. "Billy" Watkins served the people of his district and of
11 the State in the House of Representatives, from 1969 until his death in 1989, as a
12 dedicated and faithful public servant; and

13 Whereas, William T. "Billy" Watkins held many key posts in the House of
14 Representatives including Speaker Pro Tempore from 1973 through 1974, Chairman of
15 the Base Budget Appropriations Committee from 1975 through 1976, and Chairman of
16 the Expansion Budget Appropriations Committee from 1981 through 1988; and

1 Whereas, William T. "Billy" Watkins was an accomplished orator who often
2 coupled dry wit with wisdom to persuade his fellow legislators of the rightness of his
3 positions; and

4 Whereas, William T. "Billy" Watkins loved a good debate and, regardless of
5 the intensity of the disagreement, he always emerged with the respect of his opponent;
6 and

7 Whereas, William T. "Billy" Watkins had an extraordinary intellect, a tireless
8 commitment to good government, and the crusading spirit to fight for what he believed
9 in; and

10 Whereas, William T. "Billy" Watkins had a remarkable ability to fashion
11 policies that were practical, affordable, and good for the State, to shepherd those
12 policies through the General Assembly, and to make sure government officials
13 implemented them; and

14 Whereas, William T. "Billy" Watkins had a real genius for government that he
15 used to further a philosophy that incorporated fairness and fiscal responsibility; and

16 Whereas, William T. "Billy" Watkins was in the forefront of all legislation to
17 improve the university system, the community college system, and the public schools,
18 and the Basic Education Program was one of his proudest accomplishments; and

19 Whereas, William T. "Billy" Watkins was a voice for the poor, the aged,
20 children, and the common man, and for common sense against bureaucracy and special
21 interests; and

22 Whereas, William T. "Billy" Watkins was a caring, kind person who spoke
23 with pride and devotion of his wife, Louie; his children, Alma Marie and Annabelle;
24 and his grandchildren, Mart, Bridgette, Watkins, and Aleighia; and

25 Whereas, in the untimely death of William T. "Billy" Watkins, the Democratic
26 Party, Granville County, the district he served, and the citizens of the entire State lost a
27 good friend and an admired and respected man;

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

29 Section 1. The General Assembly of North Carolina honors the life and
30 memory of William T. "Billy" Watkins and expresses its deepest appreciation for the
31 leadership, humor, dedication, and vision he provided to the State.

32 Sec. 2. The General Assembly expresses its deepest sympathy to William T.
33 "Billy" Watkins' widow, his daughters, his grandchildren, and his friends, for the loss of
34 a beloved husband, father, grandfather, and friend.

35 Sec. 3. The Secretary of State shall transmit a certified copy of this resolution
36 to the family of William T. "Billy" Watkins.

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