

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA

SESSION 1989

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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 2408

Corrected Copy 7/12/90

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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, Flaherty, 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, Wiser, and Woodard.

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Referred to:

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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

1 the Base Budget Appropriations Committee from 1975 through 1976, and Chairman of  
2 the Expansion Budget Appropriations Committee from 1981 through 1988; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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