

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2005**

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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 2890*

Sponsors: Representatives Frye, McComas, Sherrill, Haire (Primary Sponsors); and Warren.

Referred to: Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House.

June 22, 2006

1 A JOINT RESOLUTION HONORING THE LIFE AND MEMORY OF HUGH
2 MORTON.

3 Whereas, Hugh Morton was born on February 21, 1921, in Wilmington,
4 North Carolina, to Julian Morton and Agnes MacRae Morton; and

5 Whereas, Hugh Morton was educated at Episcopal High School in
6 Alexandria, Virginia, and at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; and

7 Whereas, Hugh Morton married the former Julia Taylor in Greensboro on
8 December 8, 1945, and was the father of four children: Julia MacRae Morton, Hugh
9 Morton, Jr., James M. Morton, and Catherine W. Morton; and

10 Whereas, Hugh Morton was a widely renowned photographer, whose subjects
11 included athletes, politicians, musicians, wildlife, and the beautiful scenery of North
12 Carolina; and

13 Whereas, Hugh Morton developed a love for photography at the age of 13
14 while attending camp near Linville, North Carolina, and, by the age of 14, his first
15 photograph was published in Time magazine; and

16 Whereas, Hugh Morton served as a newsreel photographer in the Army's
17 Signal Corps during World War II and was awarded the Purple Heart and Bronze Star
18 after being wounded; and

19 Whereas, Hugh Morton served as President of the Carolinas Press
20 Photographers Association, was a founder and Chair of the Southern Short Course in
21 Press Photography, and founded the Grandfather Mountain Camera Clinic and the
22 Grandfather Mountain Nature Photographers' Weekend; and

23 Whereas, Hugh Morton authored books featuring his photography, including
24 "Hugh Morton's North Carolina" in 2003 and co-authored "Making A Difference In
25 North Carolina" with Ed Rankin in 1988 and "The ACC Basketball Tournament
26 Classic" with Smith Barrier in 1981; and

27 Whereas, Hugh Morton served as the producer and photographer of several
28 films and documentaries, including "Masters of Hang Gliding," "The Black Bear," "The

1 Highland Games at Grandfather," and "The Search For Clean Air," a documentary
2 narrated by Walter Cronkite that ran nationally on the PBS Network in 1995; and

3 Whereas, Hugh Morton was a strong advocate for the environment,
4 preservation, and conservation; and

5 Whereas, while Hugh Morton cherished photography, his love for
6 Grandfather Mountain was widely recognized by all who knew him; and

7 Whereas, Hugh Morton inherited Grandfather Mountain from his grandfather,
8 Hugh MacRae, in 1952 and soon after developed the mountain by extending the road to
9 top, building the Mile High Swinging Bridge and a Visitor Center, and establishing a
10 National Weather Service Weather Reporting Station, native wildlife habitats for native
11 species, a nature museum, and a theater; and

12 Whereas, Hugh Morton resisted the National Park Service's effort to build the
13 final 7.7 miles of the Blue Ridge Parkway through Grandfather Mountain, convincing
14 the federal government to build the award-winning Linn Cove Viaduct, which directs
15 the road around the mountain; and

16 Whereas, Hugh Morton donated over 4,000 acres of Grandfather Mountain to
17 the Nature Conservancy to ensure the mountain's preservation; and

18 Whereas, Hugh Morton loved his native State and took every opportunity to
19 promote it, serving as the first President of the North Carolina Azalea Festival in
20 Wilmington, Chair of the USS North Carolina Battleship Commission, which helped
21 save the battleship and bring it to Wilmington; Chair of the Save Cape Hatteras
22 Lighthouse Committee; Chair of the Governor's Advisory Committee on Travel and
23 Tourism; and as President or Chair of the Blue Ridge Parkway Association, North
24 Carolina Travel Industry Association, Southern Highlands Attractions Association,
25 North Carolina Botanical Garden Foundation, and the North Carolina Sports Hall of
26 Fame; and

27 Whereas, Hugh Morton was instrumental in persuading the Department of
28 Transportation to plant wildflowers along North Carolina's highways; pushed for the
29 passage of the "Ridge Law," which prevented development of the State's mountains
30 over more than 30 feet above the ridgeline; fought to protect the State against air
31 pollution and acid rain; and petitioned the General Assembly to pass the Clean
32 Smokestacks Act in 2002; and

33 Whereas, Hugh Morton served as a member of the North Carolina Board of
34 Conservation and Development, Chair of the State Advertising Committee, Vice-chair
35 of State Parks Committee, Chair of the AAA Carolina Motor Club; Chair of "Good
36 Roads Committee," Chair of Western Carolina Tomorrow, and Chair of North Carolina
37 Year of the Mountains Commission; and

38 Whereas, Hugh Morton helped launch the career of Andy Griffith, when he
39 asked the young actor to entertain at the North Carolina Press Photographers
40 Association banquet in 1950; and

41 Whereas, Hugh Morton was the recipient of many awards and honors, among
42 them: the Distinguished Service Medal from the University of North Carolina at Chapel
43 Hill (1979); North Carolina Award (1983); Theodore Roosevelt Award for
44 Conservation at the White House presented by President George H. W. Bush (1990);

1 Outstanding Conservationist Award by the United States Fish & Wildlife Service
2 (1996); North Carolina Press Association's North Carolinian of the Year (1997); Alfred
3 Adams Award for Economic Development from the Boone Area Chamber of
4 Commerce (2000); Phoenix Award from American Society of Travel Writers (2004);
5 and Sue Wilmoth Award for the Advancement of Tourism from the Boone Area
6 Chamber of Commerce (2006); and

7 Whereas, Hugh Morton was inducted into the University of North Carolina at
8 Chapel Hill School of Journalism Hall of Fame (1990); became the first recipient of the
9 Charles Kuralt Award for bringing exceptional, positive national attention to the State
10 of North Carolina from the North Carolina Travel Industry Association (2000); was
11 named to the North Carolina Business Hall of Fame (2002); was named the first
12 inductee into the North Carolina Tourism Hall of Fame (2006); and was honored with
13 the Hugh Morton Distinguished Professorship in Journalism and Mass Communication
14 (2006); and

15 Whereas, Hugh Morton received honorary doctorate degrees from Belmont
16 Abbey (1988), Lees-McRae College (1988), Queens College (2002), University of
17 North Carolina at Asheville (2003), University of North Carolina at Wilmington (2004),
18 Appalachian State University (2005), and North Carolina State University (2005); and

19 Whereas, Hugh Morton died on June 2, 2006, leaving the lasting legacy of
20 Grandfather Mountain and hundreds of memorable photographs of this great State and
21 its many citizens for generations to come; Now, therefore,

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

23 **SECTION 1.** The General Assembly expresses high esteem and regard for
24 the extraordinary life of Hugh Morton, one of the State's most distinguished citizens.

25 **SECTION 2.** The General Assembly extends its deepest sympathy to the
26 family of Hugh Morton for the loss of a beloved family member.

27 **SECTION 3.** The Secretary of State shall transmit a certified copy of this
28 resolution to the family of Hugh Morton.

29 **SECTION 4.** This resolution is effective upon ratification.