

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2009

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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 1103*

Sponsors: Senators Goodall; Bingham, Blake, Brock, Brown, Brunstetter, East, Forrester, Garrou, Hartsell, Hunt, Jacumin, Preston, Rouzer, Rucho, and Tillman.

Referred to: Calendar 6-9-09.

June 8, 2009

1 A JOINT RESOLUTION HONORING THE LIFE AND MEMORY OF JESSE HELMS.

2 Whereas, Jesse Alexander Helms, Jr., was born in Monroe, North Carolina, on
3 October 18, 1921, the son of Jesse Alexander Helms and Ethel Helms; and

4 Whereas, Jesse Alexander Helms, Jr., graduated from Monroe High School and
5 studied at both Wingate University in Wingate, North Carolina, and Wake Forest College, then
6 in Wake Forest, North Carolina, where he was known for his personal industry in supporting
7 himself while preparing for a career in journalism; and

8 Whereas, from his earliest years, Jesse Alexander Helms, Jr., devoted himself to the
9 highest standards of journalism, earning at age 20 an award for enterprise journalism from the
10 North Carolina Press Association for his courageous report exposing an abuse of power; and

11 Whereas, Jesse Alexander Helms, Jr., set aside his career and volunteered for the
12 United States Navy following the attack on Pearl Harbor and, while repeatedly requesting duty
13 on a warship despite his hearing loss, served with excellence in the Navy Recruiting Command
14 in both North Carolina and Georgia; and

15 Whereas, he continued to work as a journalist whenever this work did not conflict
16 with Navy duties and resumed his full-time career in communications following active duty in
17 1945, becoming the city editor of *The Raleigh Times*, and later, Director of News and Programs
18 for the Tobacco Radio Network and Radio Station WRAL, in Raleigh; and

19 Whereas, in 1953 he became the Executive Director of the North Carolina Bankers'
20 Association and editor of the *Tarheel Banker*, which became the largest state banking
21 publication in America under his stewardship; and

22 Whereas, in 1960, Jesse Alexander Helms, Jr., became Executive Vice President,
23 Vice Chairman of the Board, and assistant Chief Executive Officer of Capitol Broadcasting
24 Company, Raleigh, North Carolina, where he was a part of a groundbreaking change in the role
25 of television stations by leading the creation of an editorial board for which he wrote and
26 presented daily editorials on WRAL-TV and the 70 station strong Tobacco Radio Network. His
27 work also was printed regularly in more than 200 newspapers throughout the United States,
28 twice earning national awards from the Freedom Foundation; and

29 Whereas, Jesse Alexander Helms, Jr., served his community and his State as a
30 member of the Raleigh City Council for four years and as Chairman of the Council's Law and
31 Finance Committee, director of the North Carolina Cerebral Palsy Hospital in Durham, United
32 Cerebral Palsy of North Carolina, and Wake County Cerebral Palsy and Rehabilitation Center
33 in Raleigh, a founder and a director of Camp Willow Run at Littleton, North Carolina, and a
34 member of the Board of Trustees of Meredith College, Campbell University, and Wingate
35 University; and

36 Whereas, Jesse Alexander Helms, Jr., was elected by a majority of our citizens to
37 serve the State of North Carolina as United States Senator in 1972, 1978, 1984, 1990, and 1996



1 and represented our State with honor for thirty years before retiring in 2003, setting the U.S.
2 Capitol standard for constituent services with his dedication to doing all he could to ensure that
3 the government properly served the people, earning the respect of leaders around the nation and
4 around the world for his unyielding commitment to integrity and the principles of faith,
5 freedom, and the power of free enterprise that he championed throughout his life, and
6 personally taking time to visit with more than 100,000 North Carolina students who toured the
7 U.S. Capitol during his time of service; and

8 Whereas, Jesse Alexander Helms, Jr., allowed the formation of the Jesse Helms
9 Center in Wingate, North Carolina, after he was assured that its purpose would be to promote
10 those principles in which he believed and to serve as a resource for the education of young
11 people and their teachers, and greatly benefited all of our citizens through his personal
12 invitations to world leaders, Nobel laureates, corporate CEOs and senior government officials
13 to come and speak to students and citizens who otherwise would not have had the opportunity
14 to hear their insights; and

15 Whereas, Jesse Alexander Helms, Jr., is recognized as a leading historical figure of
16 our times, a leader in the modern conservative movement, a mentor to a generation of men and
17 women who have been inspired to follow his model of service, a favorite son of "Sweet Union"
18 North Carolina, and the recipient of scores of state, national, and international honors for his
19 record of accomplishments; and

20 Whereas, Jesse Alexander Helms, Jr., found his greatest support and encouragement
21 from his best friend and wife of more than 65 years, Dorothy Jane Coble, their three children,
22 Jane Knox, Nancy Grigg, and Charles Helms, and their seven grandchildren, Rob Knox,
23 Jennifer Knox, Mike Stuart, Ellen Gaddy, Katie Stuart, Amelia Helms, and Julie Helms; and

24 Whereas, Jesse Alexander Helms, Jr., has been remembered by the people of North
25 Carolina, the United States, and in democracy-loving nations around the world, some of whom
26 have said:

27 "Throughout his long public career, Senator Jesse Helms was a tireless advocate for
28 the people of North Carolina, a stalwart defender of limited government and free enterprise, a
29 fearless defender of a culture of life, and an unwavering champion of those struggling for
30 liberty. Under his leadership, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee was a powerful force for
31 freedom. And today, from Central America to Central Europe and beyond, people remember, in
32 the dark days when the forces of tyranny seemed on the rise, Jesse Helms took their side."
33 President George W. Bush

34 "Jesse Helms, my friend and long-time senator from my home state of North
35 Carolina, was a man of consistent conviction to conservative ideals and courage to faithfully
36 serve God and country based on principle, not popularity or politics." Billy Graham

37 "Senator Helms dedicated his life to serving the people of North Carolina. Whether
38 people agreed or disagreed with him, Senator Helms would always let his constituents know
39 where he stood on the important issues of the day." U.S. Representative Bob Etheridge

40 "Throughout his illustrious life, Senator Helms exemplified integrity, courage, and
41 statesmanship. Senator Helms contributed a great deal to the close and mutually beneficial
42 relations between my country and the United States. We will always remember him with
43 gratitude." Liu Chao-Shiuan, Premier, Republic of China; and

44 Whereas, North Carolinians mourn the death of this dedicated public servant who
45 was known and respected for his love of his home State and his nation; Now, therefore,
46 Be it resolved by the Senate, the House of Representatives concurring:

47 **SECTION 1.** The General Assembly of North Carolina expresses its appreciation
48 for the life and public service of Jesse Alexander Helms, Jr., and honors his memory.

49 **SECTION 2.** The General Assembly of North Carolina extends its deepest
50 sympathy to the family and friends of Jesse Alexander Helms, Jr., for the loss of a beloved
51 husband, father, grandfather, and friend.

- 1 **SECTION 3.** The Secretary of State shall transmit a certified copy of this
2 resolution to the family of Jesse Alexander Helms, Jr.
3 **SECTION 4.** This resolution is effective upon ratification.