

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2023

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HOUSE BILL 480

Short Title: Adopt Doc Watson Day. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Pickett, Rudow, Elmore, and Blackwell (Primary Sponsors).
For a complete list of sponsors, refer to the North Carolina General Assembly web site.

Referred to: State Government, if favorable, Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House

March 28, 2023

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT ADOPTING THE THIRD DAY OF MARCH OF EACH YEAR AS DOC WATSON DAY IN HONOR OF ARTHEL LANE "DOC" WATSON.

Whereas, Arthel Lane "Doc" Watson was born on March 3, 1923, in Stony Fork near Deep Gap, in Watauga County, North Carolina, and died on May 29, 2012, in Winston-Salem, North Carolina; and

Whereas, Doc Watson was a guitarist, banjoist, singer, and songwriter of bluegrass, country, folk, roots, and gospel music, renowned for his fingerpicking and flatpicking skills; and

Whereas, Doc Watson, blind from his second birthday, attended the Governor Morehead School in Raleigh, North Carolina, and received an honorary Doctor of Music degree from Berklee College of Music in 2010; and

Whereas, Doc Watson's musical career spanned over half a century and is most positively identified with his promoting and preserving of Appalachian and old-time folk music passed down through an oral tradition in the North Carolina mountains; and

Whereas, Doc Watson's talent and technical proficiency led to collaborations and performances with numerous legendary recording artists, including Bill Monroe, Lester Flatt, Earl Scruggs, Tony Rice, Chet Atkins, Del McCoury, and David Grisman, among others; and

Whereas, Doc Watson, in 1988, founded the music festival MerleFest, annually held on the campus of Wilkes Community College in Wilkesboro, North Carolina, in memory of his late son and performing partner, Eddy Merle Watson, and as a fundraiser for Wilkes Community College; and

Whereas, Doc Watson won seven Grammy Awards; a Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award in 2004; the National Medal of Arts, presented by President Bill Clinton in 1997; and a National Heritage Fellowship in 1998; and

Whereas, Doc Watson received the North Carolina Award in 1986 for Fine Arts; a North Carolina Folk Heritage Award in 1986; the Order of the Long Leaf Pine in 1999; and was inducted into the International Bluegrass Music Hall of Fame in 2000 and the North Carolina Music Hall of Fame in 2010; and

Whereas, in honor of Doc Watson's centennial birthday and in recognition of his promotion and preservation of North Carolina's musical heritage, it is fitting to designate March 3rd of each year as Doc Watson Day in North Carolina; Now, therefore,

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. Chapter 103 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

"§ 103-17. Doc Watson Day.



1 The third day of March of each year is designated as Doc Watson Day in North Carolina."
2 **SECTION 2.** This act is effective when it becomes law.