

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 1991
RATIFIED BILL

RESOLUTION 73
SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 1275

A JOINT RESOLUTION HONORING THE LIFE AND MEMORY OF THE
HONORABLE JOSEPH BRANCH, FORMER CHIEF JUSTICE OF THE NORTH
CAROLINA SUPREME COURT AND STATE LEGISLATOR.

Whereas, Joseph Branch was born in Enfield, North Carolina, on July 5, 1915, to James C. Branch and Laura Applewhite Branch; and

Whereas, Joseph Branch was educated at Enfield High School, Wake Forest College, and at the Wake Forest College School of Law, where he received an LL.B. in 1938; and

Whereas, Joseph Branch served his country in the United States Armed Forces from 1943 to 1945; and

Whereas, Joseph Branch practiced law in Enfield from 1938 to 1966; and

Whereas, Joseph Branch's distinguished public service to North Carolina began in 1947, when he was first elected to the North Carolina House of Representatives and then continued to serve four consecutive terms; and

Whereas, Joseph Branch served as legislative counsel to Governor Luther H. Hodges in 1957 and to Governor Dan K. Moore in 1965; and

Whereas, Joseph Branch's contributions as a jurist began in 1966, when Governor Dan K. Moore appointed him as an Associate Justice of the North Carolina Supreme Court; and

Whereas, in 1968, Joseph Branch was elected to a full term on the North Carolina Supreme Court and reelected to a full term in 1976; and

Whereas, in 1979, Governor James B. Hunt appointed Joseph Branch as Chief Justice of the North Carolina Supreme Court; and

Whereas, in 1980, Joseph Branch was elected to fill an unexpired term on the North Carolina Supreme Court and, in 1982, he was elected to a full term; and

Whereas, Joseph Branch served his community as a member of the Masonic Order, the Enfield Lions Club, and as the attorney for the Halifax County Board of Education; and

Whereas, Joseph Branch served as a trustee and former chairman of the Board of Trustees of Wake Forest University, as a member of the Board of Visitors of Wake Forest University School of Law, and as a former trustee of Wesleyan College; and

Whereas, Joseph Branch was an important member of the Democratic Party, serving as former Chairman of the Halifax County Democratic Party; and

Whereas, Joseph Branch was a member of the Halifax County Bar Association, the North Carolina Bar Association, and the American Bar Association; and

Whereas, Joseph Branch received a number of awards and honors, including an Honorary Doctor of Human Letters Degree from Elon College in 1984; an Honorary Doctor of Laws Degree from both Wake Forest University in 1983 and from Campbell University in 1981; Outstanding Appellate Judge from the North Carolina Academy of Trial Lawyers in 1981; the Carroll Wayland Weathers Distinguished Alumni Award from Wake Forest University in 1980; the Distinguished Service in Law Citation from Wake Forest University in 1975; and the Outstanding Service Alumni Award from Wake Forest University in 1971; and

Whereas, Joseph Branch was a former member of the Enfield Baptist Church, where he served as deacon, and a member of Hayes Barton Baptist Church in Raleigh; and

Whereas, the family and friends of Joseph Branch, as well as the State of North Carolina, suffered a great loss with his death; and

Whereas, Joseph Branch is survived by his wife, Frances Jane Kitchen Branch and his children, Jane Branch McRee and James C. Branch; and

Whereas, the General Assembly wishes to honor the memory of Joseph Branch and recognize his many years of public service to the people of this State and of the United States;

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

Section 1. The General Assembly honors the memory of Joseph Branch, a distinguished jurist and legislator, for his dedication and life-long career of public service and for his many contributions to the legislative and judicial systems of the State of North Carolina.

Sec. 2. The General Assembly expresses its sympathy to the family and friends of Joseph Branch for their loss.

Sec. 3. The Secretary of State shall transmit a certified copy of this resolution to the family of Joseph Branch.

Sec. 4. This resolution is effective upon ratification.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 21st day of July, 1992.

James C. Gardner
President of the Senate

Daniel Blue, Jr.
Speaker of the House of Representatives