

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2003**

**SESSION LAW 2003-4  
HOUSE BILL 382**

**AN ACT TO ALLOW DISTRICT COURT JUDGES TO PERFORM MARRIAGE  
CEREMONIES.**

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

**SECTION 1.** G.S. 51-1 reads as rewritten:

**"§ 51-1. Requisites of marriage; solemnization.**

A valid and sufficient marriage is created by the consent of a male and female person who may lawfully marry, presently to take each other as husband and wife, freely, seriously and plainly expressed by each in the presence of the other, either:

- (1) a. In the presence of an ordained minister of any religious denomination, a minister authorized by a church, a district court judge of this State, or a magistrate; and
- b. With the consequent declaration by the ~~minister~~ minister, judge, or magistrate that the persons are husband and wife; or
- (2) In accordance with any mode of solemnization recognized by any religious denomination, or federally or State recognized Indian Nation or Tribe.

Marriages solemnized before March 9, 1909, by ministers of the gospel licensed, but not ordained, are validated from their consummation."

**SECTION 2.** This act is effective when it becomes law and expires March 31, 2003.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 27<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2003.

s/ Beverly E. Perdue  
President of the Senate

s/ James B. Black  
Speaker of the House of Representatives

s/ Michael F. Easley  
Governor

Approved 8:30 a.m. this 28<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2003