

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2009**

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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION DRHJR50944-LG-259 (05/19)

Sponsors: Representatives Underhill and Wainwright (Primary Sponsors).

Referred to:

1 A JOINT RESOLUTION HONORING THE FOUNDERS OF THE CITY OF NEW BERN
2 ON THE OCCASION OF THE CITY'S THREE HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY.

3 Whereas, New Bern was founded in 1710 by Swiss and German settlers at the
4 confluence of the Neuse and Trent Rivers on the site of a former Native American community
5 called Chattawka; and

6 Whereas, Christopher de Graffenried, a member of a prominent family from the area
7 around Bern, Switzerland, founded and laid out the center of the City, which he named New
8 Bern in honor of his native home; and

9 Whereas, despite early difficulties, including disagreements with the native
10 population, New Bern prospered during the mid-eighteenth century as a major port and trading
11 center; and

12 Whereas, Royal Governor William Tryon selected New Bern as the site of the first
13 permanent capital of colonial North Carolina and had a palace built to serve as the seat of
14 government and the home of the Governor; and

15 Whereas, New Bern served as the location of a number of noteworthy events,
16 including the first Provincial Congress in defiance of British orders in 1774; the first meeting of
17 the General Assembly in 1777; visits by George Washington and sitting Presidents James
18 Monroe and Harry Truman; during Civil War occupation developed important black leaders
19 who contributed to the Union Army and helped begin the Freedmen's Bank and Bureau; and the
20 invention of "Brad's Drink" by pharmacy owner, Caleb Bradham, in 1898, which was later
21 known as Pepsi; and

22 Whereas, many of New Bern's citizens have rendered distinguished service to the
23 State and the nation, including Richard Dobbs Spaight, a member of the Continental Congress
24 and signer of the United States Constitution; John Wright Stanly, a business owner whose
25 merchant ships raided British vessels to aid the American cause during the Revolutionary War;
26 William Gaston, a State legislator, State Supreme Court Justice, author of the State's song, a
27 member of the United States Congress, founder of Saint Paul's Church, the oldest Catholic
28 congregation in the State, and a champion of tolerance; Joseph Leach, North Carolina's first
29 State treasurer and head of the Council of State during the Revolutionary War period; and
30 George Henry White, a former slave, attorney, State legislator, and the last African-American
31 to serve in the United States Congress prior to the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965;
32 and

33 Whereas, New Bern has contributed to the cultural prosperity of the State, serving
34 as the home of many artistic people including James Davis, the first printer in North Carolina;
35 Mary Bayard Clarke, a well-known 19th century poet; Bayard Wooten, a nationally known
36 early 20th century photographer; and Ervin Rouse, fiddler and composer of the Orange Blossom
37 Special; and



1 Whereas, many place names in North Carolina honor individuals whose lives were
2 important in New Bern and in North Carolina, including Wake County named for Margaret
3 Wake Tryon, Tryon named for Governor William Tryon, Gaston County and Gastonia named
4 for William Gaston, and Nash County named for Governor Abner Nash; and

5 Whereas, New Bern is home to more than 150 sites listed on the National Register
6 of Historic Properties; and

7 Whereas, New Bern has seen a revival in civic pride and an interest in preserving
8 the City's history and restoring the City's historic structures, including a new North Carolina
9 History Center at Tryon Palace, a restored federal building and courthouse, a new and
10 expanded Firemen's Museum, and a new visitor center at the site of the Battle of New Bern;
11 and

12 Whereas, New Bern is observing its 300th anniversary in 2010 and plans to highlight
13 this historic occasion through a series of year-long events and activities; and

14 Whereas, a major exhibit of New Bern and North Carolina history opened on
15 December 3, 2009, in Bern, Switzerland, at the largest Swiss history museum; and

16 Whereas, as the State's second oldest city, New Bern has made significant
17 contributions to the history of North Carolina and of the nation for the last three hundred years;
18 Now, therefore,

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

20 **SECTION 1.** The General Assembly honors the memory of the early residents of
21 the City of New Bern for their contributions to their community, the State of North Carolina,
22 and the nation.

23 **SECTION 2.** The General Assembly extends sincere good wishes to the residents
24 of the City of New Bern on the occasion of the City's 300th anniversary in 2010 and encourages
25 the citizens of this State to join New Bern in demonstrating respect for and pride in our history
26 and heritage.

27 **SECTION 3.** The Secretary of State shall transmit a certified copy of this
28 resolution to the Mayor of the City of New Bern.

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