

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA

SESSION 1997

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SENATE RESOLUTION 1602

Sponsors: Senators Foxx; Albertson, Allran, Ballance, Ballantine, Basnight, Blust, Carpenter, Carrington, Cochrane, Dalton, Dannelly, East, Forrester, Garwood, Gulley, Hartsell, Horton, Hoyle, Jenkins, Jordan, Kerr, Ledbetter, Lee, Lucas, Martin of Pitt, McDaniel, Miller, Moore, Odom, Perdue, Phillips, Plyler, Purcell, Rand, Reeves, Rucho, Shaw of Cumberland, Shaw of Guilford, Soles, Warren, Webster, Weinstein, and Winner.

Referred to:

July 15, 1998

A RESOLUTION PAYING TRIBUTE TO NORTH CAROLINA NATIVE, DOC WATSON, LEGENDARY PERFORMER AND FOLK ARTIST, AND HONORING THE LATE MERLE WATSON.

Whereas, Arthel Lane "Doc" Watson, the sixth of nine children, was born in Deep Gap, North Carolina, on March 2, 1923; and

Whereas, an early childhood illness left Doc Watson visually impaired; and

Whereas, Doc Watson developed a love for music at an early age; by age five he had learned to play the harmonica, and by age ten he had learned to play a homemade banjo; and

Whereas, at the age of 13, Doc Watson began playing the guitar and soon afterwards, he and his brother, Linney, began playing traditional music around Western North Carolina; and

Whereas, in 1941, Doc Watson joined a band that had a regular radio program in the Town of Lenoir and for the next six years played throughout North Carolina; and

Whereas, Doc Watson played and sang a large variety of folk and country music songs he learned from family members, neighbors, and from records and radio; and

Whereas, in 1947, Doc Watson married Rosa Lee Carlton, the daughter of fiddler Gaither W. Carlton; and

Whereas, in the 1950s, Doc Watson began playing the electric guitar with Jack Williams' band and developed his trademark acoustic picking style; and

Whereas, in 1961, Doc Watson joined the Clarence Ashley String Band and switched to acoustic guitar. He made his recording debut on Clarence Ashley's "Old Time Music at Clarence Ashley's" in 1961; and

Whereas, during the 1960s a revival in folk music began and Doc Watson's popularity increased; and

Whereas, in 1963, Doc Watson performed at the Newport Folk Festival and during that same year released his first solo album, "Doc Watson and Family"; and

Whereas, by 1964, Doc Watson began performing and later recording with his son, Merle Watson; and

Whereas, in 1974, Doc Watson won his first Grammy Award for Best Ethnic or Traditional Recording for his album "Then and Now" and in 1975, won another Grammy in the same category with his son Merle Watson for their album "Two Days in November"; and

Whereas, Doc Watson has won three additional Grammy Awards in the categories of Best Country Instrumental Performance in 1979 and Best Traditional Folk Recording in both 1986 and 1990; and

Whereas, Doc Watson has received the National Medal of Arts, the National Heritage Fellowship, the North Carolina Award, and several honorary doctoral degrees; and

Whereas, Doc Watson has enriched our culture with his unique mix of traditional Appalachian folk music, blues, country, gospel, and bluegrass, and his flat-picking style has influenced guitarists for generations; and

Whereas, Doc Watson continues to give limited performances and hosts the annual Merle Watson Memorial Festival in Wilkesboro, in honor of his son Merle who died in 1985; and

Whereas, Watauga County has declared July 18, 1998, as "Doc Watson Day" in Watauga County; and

Whereas, it is only fitting to honor and recognize Doc Watson, a folk artist and native son of North Carolina, who persevered and achieved greatness; Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate:

Section 1. The Senate expresses its tribute for the life and accomplishments of Doc Watson and honors the life and memory of Merle Watson.

Section 2. The Principal Clerk shall transmit a certified copy of this resolution to Doc Watson.

Section 3. This resolution is effective upon adoption.