

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA**  
**SESSION 2025**

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**Simple  
Resolution  
Adopted**

**SENATE RESOLUTION 769**  
**Adopted 6/4/25**

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Sponsors: Senators Berger and Ford (Primary Sponsors).

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Referred to: Calendar 6/4/2025

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June 3, 2025

1 A SENATE RESOLUTION HONORING ELIZABETH HANFORD DOLE, A  
2 TRAILBLAZING PUBLIC SERVANT.

3 Whereas, Elizabeth Hanford Dole is a distinguished American politician, attorney,  
4 and public servant whose career spans five decades in multiple presidential administrations and  
5 the United States Senate. She played a pioneering role in shaping public policy, breaking barriers  
6 for women in leadership, and advocating for social causes; and

7 Whereas, Elizabeth Hanford Dole was born on July 29, 1936, in Salisbury, North  
8 Carolina. She was raised in a traditional Southern family that emphasized education and civic  
9 responsibility. She attended Duke University, where she earned a degree in political science in  
10 1958. Demonstrating both academic excellence and leadership skills, she went on to study law  
11 at Harvard University, earning her Juris Doctor in 1965. At Harvard Law School, Elizabeth was  
12 one of only a few women in her class, reflecting the challenges she would face in a  
13 male-dominated field. Her legal education laid the foundation for a career that would blend law,  
14 government service, and politics; and

15 Whereas, Elizabeth Hanford Dole's career in public service began in the 1960s when  
16 she worked for the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. She later served as a consumer  
17 advocate and a staff member of the White House Office of Consumer Affairs. Her national  
18 prominence grew when she joined the Nixon and Ford administrations in various capacities. Her  
19 reputation as a capable and articulate leader led to her appointment as a member of the Federal  
20 Trade Commission under President Richard Nixon; and

21 Whereas, in 1983, President Ronald Reagan appointed Elizabeth Hanford Dole as the  
22 Secretary of Transportation, making her the first woman to hold the position. During her tenure  
23 in that office, she was instrumental in enforcing seatbelt and airbag regulations, enacting 21 as  
24 the legal drinking age, and advancing transportation safety initiatives, which has saved over  
25 563,000 lives to date with a projected 20,000 per year going forward. Under President George  
26 H.W. Bush, she served as Secretary of Labor from 1989 to 1990, where she focused on workplace  
27 safety and skills development; and

28 Whereas, after leaving government service in 1991, Elizabeth Hanford Dole became  
29 the president of the American Red Cross and the second woman to lead the organization since  
30 its founder in 1881. She held this position for eight years. During her time in that role, she  
31 modernized the organization and emphasized improving its blood collection and disaster  
32 response systems. Her leadership revitalized the institution, ensuring it remained an effective  
33 humanitarian organization; and

34 Whereas, Elizabeth Hanford Dole successfully ran for election to the U.S. Senate  
35 from North Carolina in 2002. She served the State admirably in that capacity from 2003 to 2009.



1 As a senator, she focused on military affairs, veterans' issues, and healthcare, reflecting her  
2 commitment to public service and national security; and

3 Whereas, Elizabeth Hanford Dole was married to Robert Joseph "Bob" Dole, a  
4 longtime U.S. Senator from Kansas and the 1996 Republican presidential nominee, until his  
5 death in 2021. The couple was regarded as a political power duo, supporting each other's careers  
6 while maintaining their own distinguished identities in public service; and

7 Whereas, beyond Elizabeth Hanford Dole's political career, she founded the Elizabeth  
8 Dole Foundation in 2012, which focuses on supporting military caregivers. Over the past decade,  
9 she and the Foundation have empowered, supported, and honored the nation's 14.3 million  
10 military caregivers: the spouses, parents, family members, and friends who care for America's  
11 wounded, ill, or injured veterans. The Elizabeth Dole Act, passed in 2024 and spearheaded by  
12 the Foundation, strengthens caregiver support at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs,  
13 establishes a user-friendly resource center, and expands VA Home-Based Community Services  
14 nationwide. Her work in this area highlights her dedication to the well-being of those who serve  
15 our country and their families; and

16 Whereas, Elizabeth Hanford Dole has received numerous honors and awards  
17 throughout her lifetime in recognition of her contributions to public service, leadership, and  
18 humanitarian efforts. Some of the most notable honors include: the Presidential Medal of  
19 Freedom (2024), which recognized her lifelong public service, National Women's Hall of Fame  
20 Induction (1995), which recognized her trailblazing career in government and public service,  
21 Public Welfare Medal (2004), which was awarded by The National Academy of Sciences for her  
22 leadership at the American Red Cross and dedication to public service, Virginia Military Institute  
23 Distinguished Service Award (2007), which honored her advocacy on behalf of military families  
24 and veterans; and numerous honorary degrees from universities such as Duke University,  
25 Harvard University, and the University of North Carolina, recognizing her contributions to law,  
26 government, and humanitarian work; and

27 Whereas, Elizabeth Hanford Dole's career has been marked by numerous firsts and  
28 groundbreaking achievements. From being one of the first women to graduate from Harvard Law  
29 School to becoming a United States Senator and leading major federal agencies, she has paved  
30 the way for future generations of women in leadership. Her contributions to government,  
31 philanthropy, and public service ensure that her legacy will endure for years to come; Now,  
32 therefore,

33 Be it resolved by the Senate:

34 **SECTION 1.** The Senate wishes to honor Elizabeth Hanford Dole, a distinguished  
35 North Carolinian and former United States Senator, for her many years of public service and  
36 desires to express its sincere gratitude for all that she has contributed to our State and nation.

37 **SECTION 2.** The Principal Clerk shall transmit a copy of this resolution to Elizabeth  
38 Hanford Dole.

39 **SECTION 3.** This resolution is effective upon adoption.