

INTRODUCTION TO THE NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL ASSEMBLY



AN ACTIVITY BOOK ABOUT THE
LEGISLATIVE PROCESS, STATE
SYMBOLS, AND OUR GOVERNMENT

NORTH CAROLINA STATE GOVERNMENT

There are three branches of government established by the North Carolina Constitution: the Legislative Branch, the Executive Branch, and the Judicial Branch.

Legislative Branch

The Legislative Branch makes laws for North Carolina. It is made up of the Senate and the House of Representatives, which together are known as the General Assembly. The Legislature meets biennially, and all Members are elected for two-year terms.



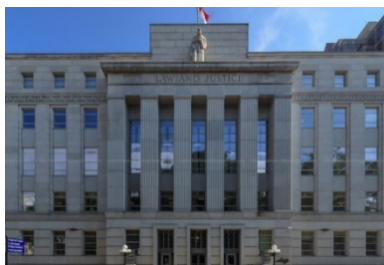
Executive Branch

The Executive Branch of government enforces laws made by the legislature. The head of this branch is the Governor, who is elected every four years. Along with the Governor, the Executive Branch also includes the Lieutenant Governor, the Council of State, and many State agencies.



Judicial Branch

The Judicial Branch interprets what our laws mean and makes decisions about the laws and those who break them. The courts of the Judicial Branch are split into three divisions: the Appellate Court Division, the Superior Court Division and the District Court Division.



THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

Before Raleigh became the capital city, the North Carolina General Assembly, which consisted of one house, moved from town to town. They would meet in courthouses, local schools, and residences, or any structure big enough to hold the legislators.

The General Assembly first met in Raleigh in 1794 at a simple two-story brick building that was the first Capitol. Between 1820 and 1824, the State House was enlarged by State Architect William Nichols. A third floor and eastern and western wings were added to the building, and a domed rotunda was constructed at its center to house Antonio Canova's statue of President George Washington, acquired by the state in 1821. Sadly, when the State House burned in 1831, the statue was damaged beyond repair. A new Capitol building was finished in 1840 and it is the building you see on the Capitol grounds when you visit Raleigh. All three branches of government met in this building until our state continued to grow and each branch needed more space. This building was used by the General Assembly until the present Legislative Building was completed in 1963.

Today, the General Assembly of North Carolina is made up of two houses: the House of Representatives and the Senate. All Members of the General Assembly are elected by the voters from their respective districts. The primary duties of the Members are to create new laws, change existing laws that affect the people of our state, and create a budget.

The General Assembly meets in regular session beginning in January of each odd-numbered year, and adjourns to reconvene the following even-numbered year for a shorter session. The Governor may call an extra session when it is deemed necessary or the General Assembly may convene for an extra session when signed requests are received by three-fifths of the Members of both the House and the Senate.

1782 State House



1820 Capitol



1840 - Present Capitol



THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The House of Representatives consists of 120 Members who serve a term of two years. The presiding officer of the House of Representatives is the Speaker of the House. The Speaker is elected by the Members from their membership for a two-year term. The Speaker's duties include maintaining order in the House and appointing Members to the House Standing Committees. The Members also elect a Speaker Pro Tempore from their membership, who carries out the duties of the Speaker in an absence. The Principal Clerk, who is responsible for the administrative duties of the House, is elected by the Members every two years. The Reading Clerk and Sergeant-at-Arms are appointed by the Speaker.



THE SENATE

The North Carolina Senate is composed of 50 Members who serve a term of two years. The Lieutenant Governor is the presiding officer of the Senate and is elected in a statewide election every four years. The main duty of the Lieutenant Governor is to maintain order in the Senate. Committee appointments in the Senate are made by the President Pro Tempore, who is elected by the Members of the Senate from their membership. If the Lieutenant Governor is absent, the President Pro Tempore carries out the duties of the presiding officer. The Members of the Senate also elect a Principal Clerk, Reading Clerk, and Sergeant-at-Arms.



MATCHING

Fill in the blank on the left with its correct answer on the right by placing the correct letter in the blank.

- | | |
|--|------------------------|
| 1. The House of Representatives has _____ members. | A. Lieutenant Governor |
| 2. The Senate has _____ members. | B. Esse Quam Videri |
| 3. The presiding officer of the House of Representatives is called the _____. | C. 2 |
| 4. The President of the Senate is the _____. | D. Law |
| 5. Another name for the State Legislature is the _____. | E. Principal Clerk |
| 6. The person in charge of administrative duties in the House and Senate is the _____. | F. 1963 |
| 7. When a bill is passed by the General Assembly and signed by the Governor, it becomes a _____. | G. 50 |
| 8. North Carolina's motto is _____. | H. Speaker |
| 9. The General Assembly first met in its current location in _____. | I. 120 |
| 10. Members of the House and Senate are elected for _____ years. | J. General Assembly |

**PREAMBLE
TO THE
NORTH CAROLINA
CONSTITUTION**

We, the people of the State of North Carolina, grateful to Almighty God, the Sovereign Ruler of Nations, for the preservation of the American Union and the existence of our civil, political and religious liberties, and acknowledging our dependence upon Him for the continuance of those blessings to us and our posterity, do, for the more certain security thereof and for the better government of this State, ordain and establish this Constitution.

FILL IN THE BLANKS WITH THE CORRECT WORD.

**PREAMBLE
TO THE
NORTH CAROLINA
CONSTITUTION**

We, the people of the State of _____
_____, grateful to Almighty God, the
Sovereign Ruler of Nations, for the
_____ of the American Union and
the existence of our _____, _____ and
_____, and acknowledging
our dependence upon Him for the
_____ of those blessings to us and
our _____, do, for the more certain
security thereof and for the _____
_____ of this State, ordain and
establish this _____.

STATE SYMBOLS AND OTHER OFFICIAL ADOPTIONS

(In order of adoption)

The NC General Assembly adopted its first state symbol in 1885 recognizing the official State Flag. Since that time, the Legislature has adopted more symbols. Some symbols are emblems or well-known representations of the state's history and culture that have been important to support the people or the economy of our state.

State Seal: Great Seal of the State of North Carolina

State Motto: Esse Quam Videri (To be rather than to seem)

State Song: The Old North State

State Flower: Dogwood

State Bird: Cardinal

State Colors: Red and Blue

State Toast: "A Toast" to North Carolina

State Tree: Pine

State Shell: Scotch Bonnet

State Mammal: Gray Squirrel

State Saltwater Fish: Channel Bass

State Insect: Honeybee

State Precious Stone: Emerald

State Reptile: Eastern Box Turtle

State Rock: Granite

State Beverage: Milk

State Historical Boat: Shad Boat

State Dog: Plott Hound

State Military Academy: Oak Ridge Military Academy

State Tartan: Carolina Tartan

State Watermelon Festivals: Hertford Watermelon Festival and Fair Bluff Watermelon Festival

State Vegetable: Sweet Potato

State Fruit: Scuppernong Grape

State Red Berry: Strawberry

State Blue Berry: Blueberry

State International Festival: Folkmoot USA

State Wildflower: Carolina Lily

State Aviation Hall of Fame and Museum: Asheboro Municipal Airport

State Museum of Aviation: Wilmington International Airport

State Carnivorous Plant: Venus Flytrap

State Birthplace of Traditional Pottery: Seagrove area

State Folk Dance: Clogging

State Popular Dance: Shagging

State Christmas Tree: Fraser Fir

State Freshwater Trout: Southern Appalachian Brook Trout

State Collard Festival: Ayden Collard Festival

State Food Festival: Lexington Barbecue Festival

State Community Theater: Thalian Association in Wilmington

State Potato Festival: Albemarle Potato Festival

State Horse: Colonial Spanish Mustang

The Honor and Remember Flag: To honor and recognize members of the Armed Forces of the United States who have died in the line of duty

State Shad Festival: Grifton Shad Festival

State Herring Festival: Jamesville Herring Festival

State Mineral: Gold

State Sport: Stock car racing

State Shrimp Festival: Sneads Ferry Shrimp Festival

State Butterfly: Eastern Tiger Swallowtail

State Fall Livermush Festival: Shelby Livermush Festival

State Spring Livermush Festival: Marion Livermush Festival

State Mullet Festival: Swansboro Mullet Festival

State Fossil: Fossilized megalodon shark teeth

State Frog: Pine Barrens Tree Frog

State Salamander: Marbled Salamander

State Marsupial: Virginia Opossum

State Folk Art: Whirligigs created by Vollis Simpson

State Art Medium: Clay

State Peanut Festival: Dublin Peanut Festival

State Blue Monday Shad Fry: East Arcadia Blue Monday Shad Fry

State Veterans Day Parade: Warsaw Veterans Day Parade

State Fly Fishing Museum: Fly Fishing Museum of the Southern Appalachians in Bryson City

State Outdoor Festival: The North Carolina Outdoor Festival (Montgomery County)

State Woolly Worm Festival: Woolly Worm Festival in Banner Elk

WORD SEARCH

Find the hidden North Carolina symbols listed below.

G	A	R	I	J	M	E	U	P	L	O	T	T	H	O	U	N	D
J	R	E	A	S	T	E	R	N	B	O	X	T	U	R	T	L	E
S	C	A	K	L	X	T	G	C	Y	K	L	I	G	A	O	V	E
W	A	C	Y	U	M	I	L	K	K	E	M	E	R	A	L	D	S
E	R	I	D	S	L	N	O	M	Y	U	S	I	A	P	F	W	S
E	D	C	O	E	Q	R	T	O	V	S	B	L	N	I	S	C	E
T	I	H	I	E	F	U	N	P	A	U	O	C	I	R	C	V	Q
P	N	D	A	I	E	G	I	B	L	Z	H	I	T	G	O	P	U
O	A	P	E	S	P	N	L	R	L	S	Y	G	E	H	T	X	A
T	L	D	X	N	I	E	H	I	R	J	I	M	K	H	C	O	M
A	D	C	B	R	N	Q	R	J	S	E	T	D	Z	U	H	Y	V
T	E	G	E	N	E	S	T	Z	K	A	L	R	E	N	B	D	I
O	D	E	A	S	T	U	R	F	L	O	G	V	H	I	O	M	D
F	W	H	F	Z	J	T	Q	J	G	M	I	B	R	L	N	N	E
V	C	U	E	D	O	G	W	O	O	D	N	O	A	Z	N	X	R
G	H	Y	C	A	R	O	L	I	N	A	L	I	L	Y	E	E	I
H	O	N	E	Y	B	E	E	A	B	Z	P	K	Q	O	T	Y	A

North Carolina Symbols

Beverage: MILK

Bird: CARDINAL

Dog: PLOTT HOUND

Salt water fish: CHANNEL BASS

Flower: DOGWOOD

Insect: HONEYBEE

Mammal: GRAY SQUIRREL

Mineral: GOLD

Motto: ESSE QUAM VIDERI

Reptile: EASTERN BOX TURTLE

Rock: GRANITE

Shell: SCOTCH BONNETT

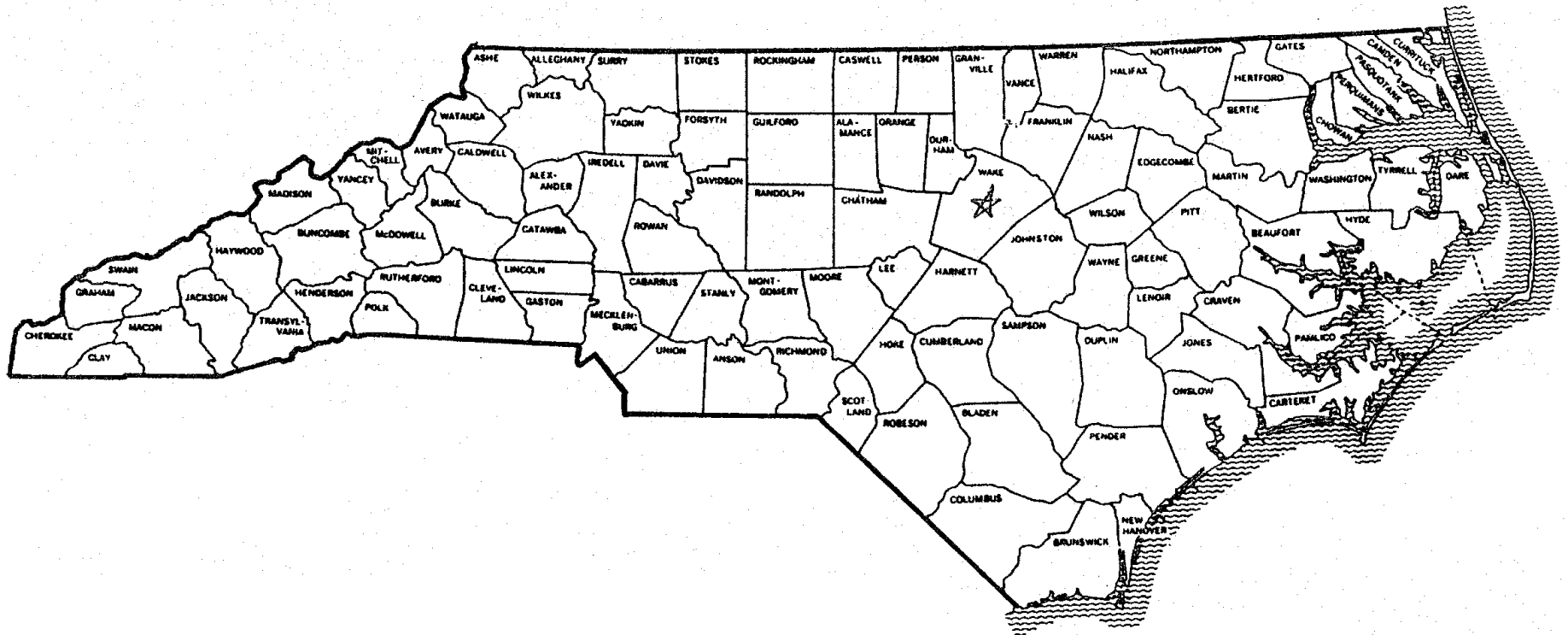
Stone: EMERALD

Tree: PINE

Vegetable: SWEET POTATO

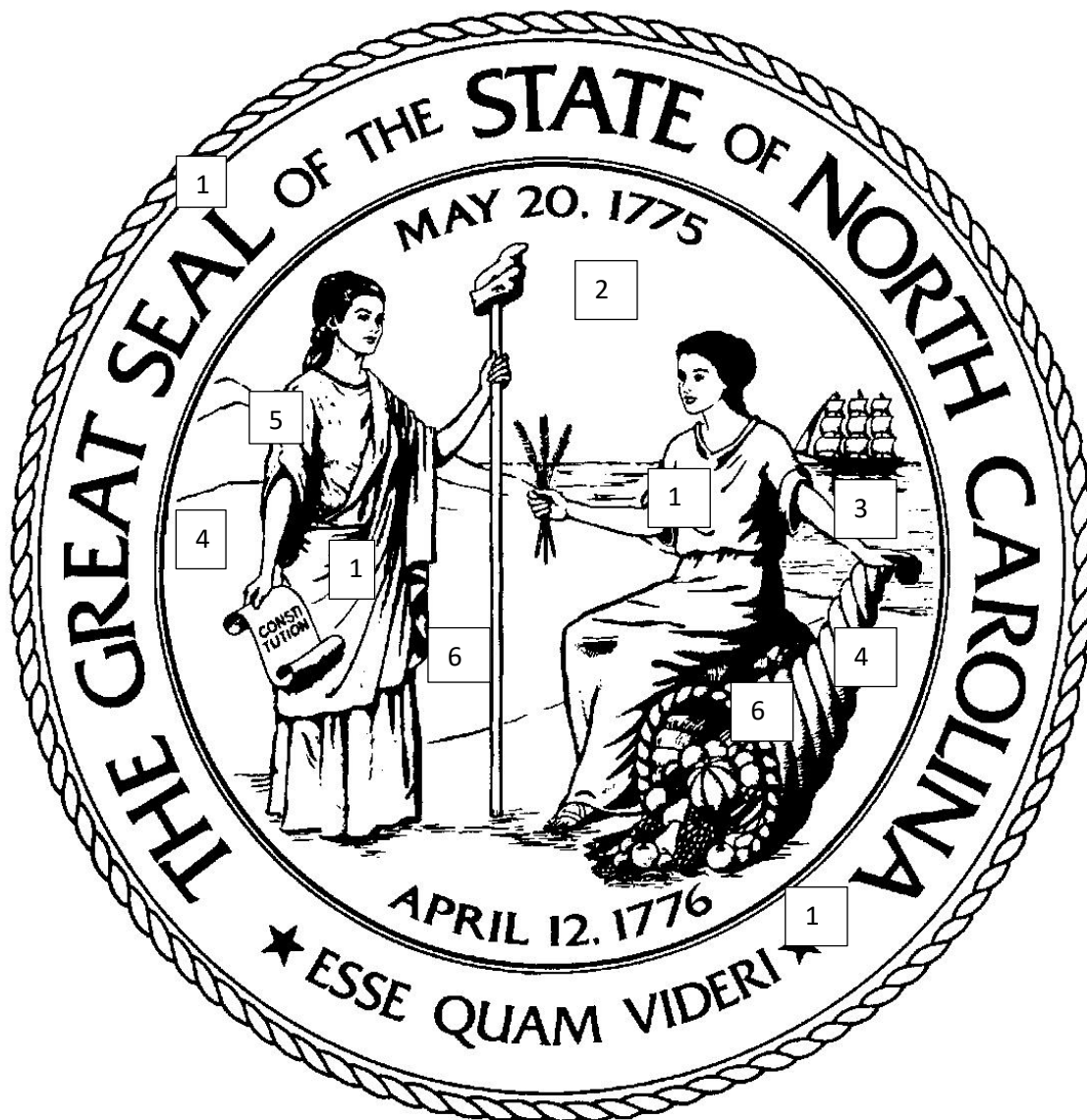
Wildflower: CAROLINA LILY

NORTH CAROLINA COUNTIES



There are 100 counties in North Carolina.
Which county do you live in?
Can you find it on the Map?

THE STATE SEAL

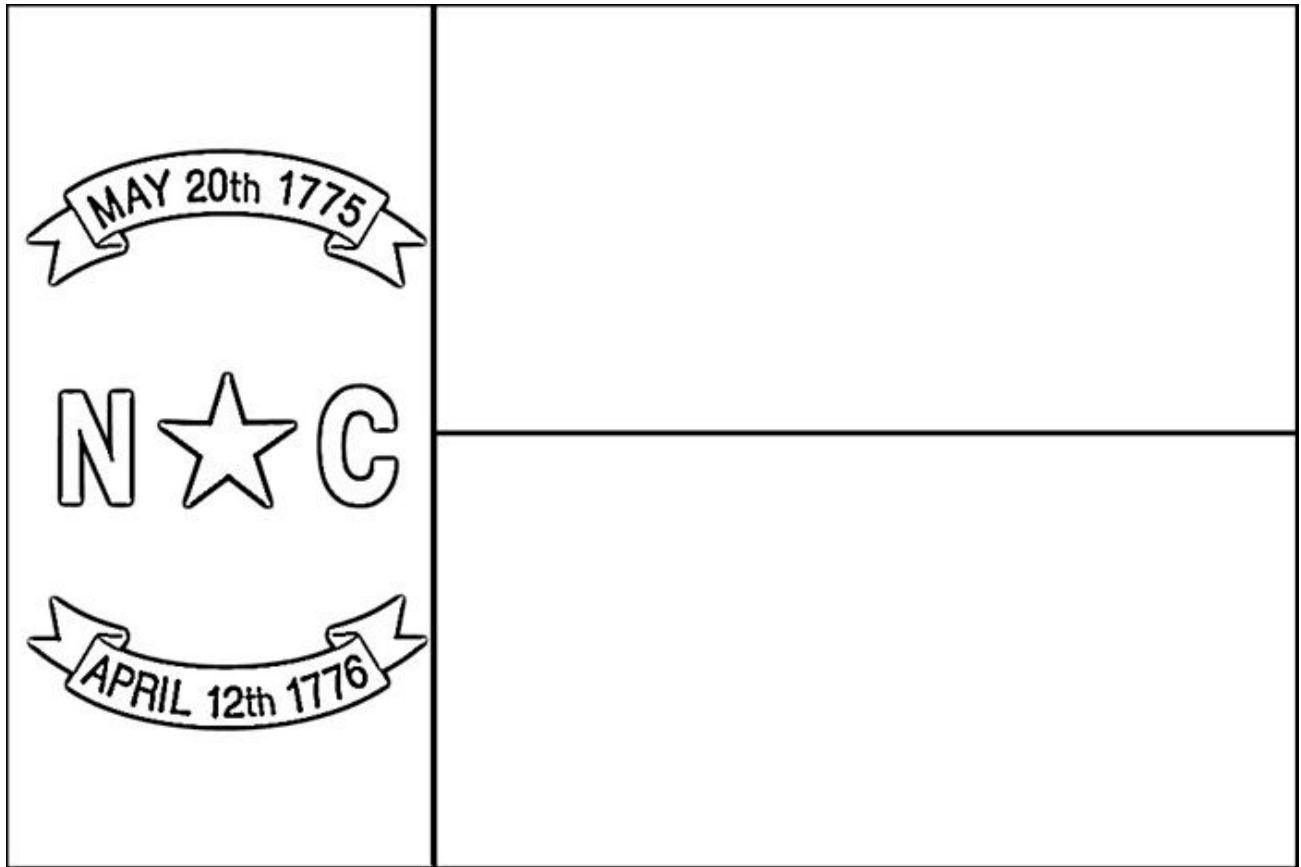


When the government of the State of North Carolina was organized, the Constitution adopted in 1776 provided for a state seal that should be called the "Great Seal of the State of North Carolina." In 1972, the Seal was made one-sided. Other changes were made in 1835, 1893, and 1971. In 1983, the date April 12, 1776, was added at the bottom to commemorate the Halifax Resolves, a document which gave North Carolina's delegates to the Continental Congress the authority to vote for independence. The date May 20, 1775, is thought to be the date of the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence. This document made a statement in favor of independence from England for the colonies. The State Motto, "Esse Quam Videri," which is Latin for "To be rather than to seem," appears at the bottom of the Seal.

Color the Seal using the guide below:

- 1) Yellow 2) Light blue 3) Dark blue 4) Green 5) Red 6) Brown

NORTH CAROLINA STATE FLAG



Color your North Carolina Flag

The panel on the left is blue. The top strip on the right is red and the bottom is white.

A yellow N and C with a white star in the center are on the blue side panel.

The ribbons are yellow above and below the letters with the dates May 20th, 1775 (Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence) and April 12th, 1776 (Halifax Resolves).

The flag was adopted in 1885.

ANSWER KEY

MATCHING

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. I | 6. E |
| 2. G | 7. D |
| 3. H | 8. B |
| 4. A | 9. F |
| 5. J | 10. C |

WORD SEARCH

G								P	L	O	T	T	H	O	U	N	D	
	R	E	A	S	T	E	R	N	B	O	X	T	U	R	T	L	E	
S	C	A											G				E	
W	A		Y			M	I	L	K		E	M	E	R	A	L	D	S
E	R			S							S	A					S	
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P	N						I	B					T	O			U	
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				C	A	R	O	L	I	N	A	L	I	L	Y	E	I	
H	O	N	E	Y	B	E	E								T			

FILL IN THE BLANK

PREAMBLE TO THE NORTH CAROLINA CONSTITUTION

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