

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2007**

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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 161

Sponsors: Representatives Ray, Walker, Parmon, Goodwin (Primary Sponsors); Barnhart, Black, Carney, Coates, Folwell, Frye, Goforth, Hilton, Howard, Justus, Killian, McGee, Moore, Neumann, Samuelson, Saunders, Setzer, Wilkins, Williams, and Wray.

Referred to: Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House.

February 13, 2007

1 A JOINT RESOLUTION HONORING THE LIFE AND MEMORY OF NORTH
2 CAROLINA'S NATIVE SON, BENNY PARSONS, NASCAR CHAMPION AND
3 POPULAR SPORTSCASTER.

4 Whereas, Benny Parsons was born on July 12, 1941, in Wilkes County; and

5 Whereas, Benny Parsons graduated from West Wilkes High School and
6 moved to Detroit for a while where he worked for a gas station and a cab company
7 owned by his father. There he began to develop his skills as a racer and returned to
8 North Carolina to race in the ARCA series; and

9 Whereas, in 1963, Benny Parsons began stock car racing and, in 1965, earned
10 the Automobile Racing Club of America (ARCA) Rookie of the Year Award; and

11 Whereas, Benny Parsons went on to win ARCA championships in 1968 and
12 1969 before joining NASCAR in 1970; and

13 Whereas, Benny Parsons' first NASCAR victory was in 1971 at the South
14 Boston Speedway in Virginia; and

15 Whereas, Benny Parsons won the NASCAR Winston Cup Championship in
16 1973. His championship was followed by his winning the Daytona 500 in 1975 and the
17 World 600 in Charlotte in 1980; and

18 Whereas, Benny Parsons became the first NASCAR driver to qualify a stock
19 car over 200 mph, when he reached a speed of 200.176 mph during the Winston 500 at
20 the Talladega Superspeedway in 1982; and

21 Whereas, from 1964 through 1988, Benny Parsons competed in 526 races
22 compiling a record of 21 wins, 199 top-5 finishes, and 283 top-10 finishes; and

23 Whereas, Benny Parsons' outstanding racing skills earned him numerous
24 honors and awards; he became the first ARCA champion to be inducted into the
25 International Sports Hall of Fame in 1994, he was inducted into the Motorsports Hall of
26 Fame of America in 2006, and he was recognized as one of the 50 greatest drivers in
27 NASCAR history in 1998; and

1 Whereas, Benny Parsons retired from racing in 1988 and began a career in
2 broadcasting with ESPN in 1989; and

3 Whereas, while working at ESPN, Benny Parsons received an Emmy Award
4 for his exceptional reporting in 1996; and

5 Whereas, in 2001, Benny Parsons joined NBC and TNT as a NASCAR
6 announcer and color commentator; and

7 Whereas, Benny Parsons' other endeavors included serving as the host of the
8 "Fast Talk with Benny Parsons," a nationally syndicated radio show on Performance
9 Racing Network; and

10 Whereas, Benny Parsons was a respected and beloved member of his
11 community for his dedicated time, work, and monetary contributions to the Ellerbe
12 Lions Club, Ellerbe Parent Teachers Association, Speedway Children Charities, Boys
13 and Girls Club of America, Victory Junction Gang Camp, National Autism Society,
14 American Cancer Society, Hendrick Bone Marrow Foundation, Boy Scouts of America,
15 National Motorsports Press Association, and many other community-based
16 organizations during his career as a stock car driver and television commentator; and

17 Whereas, Benny Parsons served as a proprietor of Rendezvous Ridge Winery,
18 a 56-acre vineyard located near his boyhood home in Wilkes County on land that has
19 been owned by the Parsons family for many years; and

20 Whereas, Benny Parsons passed away on January 16, 2007; and

21 Whereas, Benny Parsons leaves to cherish his memory: his wife, Terri
22 Parsons, two sons, Kevin Parsons and Keith Parsons, and two grandchildren, Emily
23 Parsons and Libbie Parsons; and

24 Whereas, on January 30, 2007, Benny Parsons was posthumously awarded
25 the North Carolina Motorsports Association Achievement in Motorsports Tribute
26 Award and the Order of the Long Leaf Pine; Now, therefore,

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

28 **SECTION 1.** The General Assembly honors the memory of Benny Parsons
29 and expresses its appreciation for his life and contributions to motorsports.

30 **SECTION 2.** The General Assembly extends its deepest sympathy to the
31 family of Benny Parsons for the loss of a beloved family member.

32 **SECTION 3.** The Secretary of State shall transmit a certified copy of this
33 resolution to the family of Benny Parsons.

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