

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA

**SESSION 2007
RATIFIED BILL**

**RESOLUTION 2008-26
HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 161**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

SECTION 4. This resolution is effective upon ratification.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 10th day of July, 2008.

Beverly E. Perdue
President of the Senate

Joe Hackney
Speaker of the House of Representatives