

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA

SESSION 1997

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SENATE BILL 1281

Rules and Operations of the Senate Committee Substitute Adopted 6/22/98

Short Title: NC Gold Discovery/Funds.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to: Appropriations.

May 27, 1998

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT TO COMMEMORATE THE BICENTENNIAL OF AMERICA'S FIRST
3 GOLD DISCOVERY AND TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS FOR THE
4 OBSERVANCE.

Whereas, John Reed, a Hessian soldier of the American Revolution who fled the British army, took up farming in present-day Cabarrus County; and

Whereas, in 1799 his twelve-year-old son Conrad discovered a small wedge-shaped rock that weighed an estimated seventeen pounds; and

Whereas, that find was the first authenticated discovery of gold north of Mexico and initiated the first gold rush in America; and

Whereas, during the next half century North Carolina played a leading role in gold mining, this activity reaching from the mountains to the coastal plain and employing thousands of North Carolinians; and

Whereas, the Bechtler family established the nation's first private mint in Rutherford County; and

Whereas, all of the native gold minted in the United States prior to 1828 came from the Old North State; and

Whereas, the United States government established a branch mint in Charlotte in 1837; and

Whereas, before 1849 North Carolina produced more gold than any state in the Union;
and

Whereas, Canada and Alaska are commemorating the centennial of the Klondike gold
rush; and

Whereas, the state of California is commemorating the sesquicentennial of the California
gold rush; and

Whereas, North Carolina needs to reassert its primacy in the history of gold in America;
Now, therefore,

1 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

2 Section 1. The General Assembly calls upon all North Carolinians to observe,
3 celebrate, and participate in events commemorating the bicentennial of the discovery of
4 gold at the Reed Gold Mine State Historic Site and the importance of gold in the history
5 of the State and nation.

6 Section 2. There is appropriated from the General Fund to Gold History
7 Corporation, Inc., a nonprofit corporation, the sum of one hundred thousand dollars
8 (\$100,000) for the 1998-99 fiscal year to conduct events, present educational programs,
9 print publications, and direct other historical observances of the bicentennial of the
10 discovery of gold in North Carolina.

11 Section 3. This act becomes effective July 1, 1998.