

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA**

**SESSION 1997**

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**SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 211**

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Sponsors: Senators Forrester; Allran, Ballantine, Blust, Carpenter, Carrington, Clark, Cochrane, Conder, East, Foxx, Garwood, Hartsell, Hoyle, Jordan, Kerr, Kincaid, Ledbetter, Lee, Lucas, Miller, Odom, Page, Perdue, Phillips, Rand, Reeves, Rucho, Shaw of Cumberland, Shaw of Guilford, Warren, Webster, Weinstein, and Wellons.

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Referred to: Rules and Operations of the Senate.

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February 20, 1997

1 A JOINT RESOLUTION NAMING BILLY GRAHAM AS THEOLOGIAN  
2 LAUREATE.

3       Whereas, Billy Graham was born William Franklin Graham on November 7,  
4 1918, in Charlotte, North Carolina, to William Franklin Graham and Morrow Coffey  
5 Graham; and

6       Whereas, Billy Graham graduated from the Florida Bible Institute, now  
7 Trinity College, in 1940, and Wheaton College in 1943; and

8       Whereas, Billy Graham married Wheaton College classmate, Ruth McCue  
9 Bell in 1943, and from their union five children were born: Virginia, Anne Morrow,  
10 Ruth Bell, William Franklin, and Nelson Edman; and

11       Whereas, from 1943 to 1945, Billy Graham served as pastor of the First  
12 Baptist Church in Western Springs, Illinois, and later joined Youth for Christ  
13 International, where he ministered to young people and service personnel from 1945 to  
14 1950; and

15       Whereas, after World War II, Billy Graham began to preach throughout the  
16 United States and Europe, but gained international prominence as an evangelist through  
17 a series of crusades that began in 1949; and

18       Whereas, Billy Graham founded the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association  
19 in 1950, which launched his weekly radio program "Hour of Decision"; and

1           Whereas, Billy Graham has received numerous awards and honorary degrees  
2 including the Congressional Gold Medal in 1996, the North Carolina Award for Public  
3 Service in 1986, the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1983, the Sylvanus Thayer  
4 Award from the United States Military Academy Association of Graduates at West  
5 Point in 1972, the International Brotherhood Award from the National Conference of  
6 Christians and Jews in 1971, and the Gold Award of the George Washington Carver  
7 Memorial Institute in 1963; and

8           Whereas, Billy Graham has written 17 books, all of which have become best  
9 sellers; and

10           Whereas, Billy Graham has participated in eight presidential inaugurations  
11 from the inauguration of President Dwight Eisenhower in 1953, to the inauguration of  
12 President Bill Clinton in 1997; and

13           Whereas, Billy Graham's messages have reached over 210 million people in  
14 over 185 countries through his crusades, television appearances, and radio programs,  
15 making him the most well-known preacher; and

16           Whereas, over the course of many years, people from all walks of life have  
17 sought Billy Graham's counsel; and

18           Whereas, Billy Graham has distinguished himself as a man of great faith,  
19 showing a genuine interest in reaching out to those seeking spiritual guidance; and

20           Whereas, Billy Graham is admired and respected by millions of people over  
21 all the world; and

22           Whereas, naming Billy Graham as Theologian Laureate of North Carolina  
23 would be a fitting tribute to one of North Carolina's most beloved citizens;

24 Now, therefore, be it resolved by the Senate, the House of Representatives concurring:

25           Section 1. Billy Graham is named Theologian Laureate of the State of North  
26 Carolina.

27           Section 2. The Secretary of State shall transmit a certified copy of this  
28 resolution to Billy Graham.

29           Section 3. This resolution is effective upon ratification.