

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2001

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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 1034

Sponsors: Representatives Wainwright, Underhill (Primary Sponsors); Alexander, Barefoot, Luebke, and McLawhorn.

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

April 9, 2001

1 A JOINT RESOLUTION HONORING THE MEMORY OF MEMBERS OF PAST
2 GENERAL ASSEMBLIES AND THE FIRST TRYON PALACE COMMISSION.

3 Whereas, the first session of the General Assembly of the State of North
4 Carolina was convened on April 7, 1777, in the Town of New Bern, in the government
5 house generally known as the Palace, which was built by British Governor William
6 Tryon as the first permanent capital of the Colony of North Carolina; and

7 Whereas, legislators attending this session began the monumental task of
8 creating a free and independent State, unprecedented in the history of the world; and

9 Whereas, their actions created the legal framework within which our great
10 State operates today; and

11 Whereas, the Palace was the site of the inauguration of the State's first four
12 Governors and functioned as the government house until the City of Raleigh was
13 designated as the official State Capital in 1794; and

14 Whereas, President George Washington visited the Town of New Bern and
15 the Palace in April 1791, as part of his Southern Tour; and

16 Whereas, the original Palace was destroyed by fire in February 1798; and

17 Whereas, in 1939, the original plans for the Palace drawn by the English
18 architect John Hawks were discovered in New York City by Gertrude Carraway of New
19 Bern, the first director of the Tryon Palace Restoration Project; and

20 Whereas, the Latham and Kellenberger families of Greensboro pledged
21 financial support for the restoration of Tryon Palace and challenged the State of North
22 Carolina to join in this private/public partnership for the common good; and

23 Whereas, in 1945, the General Assembly appropriated funds for the purchase
24 of the Palace site and created the Tryon Palace Commission, which was composed of 25
25 members representing every part of the State and chaired by Mrs. Maude Moore
26 Latham; and

1 Whereas, under the leadership of the Tryon Palace Commission and with the
2 full support of the General Assembly, the Palace was restored in 1959 and returned to
3 the citizens of this State as a living legacy recalling our distinguished past; and

4 Whereas, today the site has grown to 22 acres, with 38 structures and
5 dependencies, including 12 historically important buildings, 14 acres of gardens, and
6 museum collections encompassing 4,800 historic objects and 1,700 rare books; and

7 Whereas, attendance has grown to more than 80,000 visitors annually,
8 including 18,000 school children, as well as visitors from all 100 North Carolina
9 counties, all 50 states of the United States, and more than 20 foreign countries; and

10 Whereas, these visitors learn about North Carolina and American history
11 spanning two centuries and encompassing the lifestyles of all classes of society; and

12 Whereas, a major African-American History Project has been launched to
13 incorporate the stories of people of color, free and enslaved, into the site and to honor
14 their many contributions to our shared legacy; and

15 Whereas, nearly 1,000 citizens have joined in support of the Palace through
16 membership in the Tryon Palace Council of Friends; and

17 Whereas, Tryon Palace has purchased a six-acre tract on the Trent River
18 adjacent to the Palace grounds to be used for a History Education and Visitors Center;
19 and

20 Whereas, the center will lead the nation in its innovative design and use of
21 technology to enhance and expand our understanding of the past; and

22 Whereas, the center will encourage family participation and highlight the role
23 of waterways in the early development of North Carolina and the nation and will teach
24 ecological and environmental lessons for today's world; Now, therefore,

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

26 **SECTION 1.** The General Assembly honors the memory of the great
27 patriots of past eras: the members of the General Assembly who convened at Tryon
28 Palace in 1777 and began the arduous task of creating a free and independent State; the
29 members of the General Assembly of 1945 who had the foresight to begin restoration of
30 the Palace in order to return to the State this place of historical significance; and the
31 members of the first Tryon Palace Commission who through their leadership, devotion,
32 and generosity brought to fruition the restoration of the Palace.

33 **SECTION 2.** The Secretary of State shall transmit a certified copy of this
34 resolution to the Tryon Palace Commission.

35 **SECTION 3.** This resolution is effective upon ratification.