

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA**  
**SESSION 2009**

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**HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 1655**

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Sponsors: Representatives Rapp, Tarleton, Haire, Frye (Primary Sponsors); Blackwell, England, Fisher, Gillespie, Goforth, Guice, Hurley, Justus, Moore, Setzer, Starnes, Stevens, Underhill, West, and Whilden.

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

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June 22, 2009

1 A JOINT RESOLUTION HONORING THE SEVENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE  
2 BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY.

3       Whereas, the Blue Ridge Parkway will be celebrating its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2010;  
4 and

5       Whereas, construction of the Blue Ridge Parkway took more than 52 years,  
6 beginning on September 11, 1935, near the Cumberland Knob in North Carolina and ending  
7 with the last portion being laid out near the Linn Cove Viaduct in 1987; and

8       Whereas, the 469-mile Parkway runs through the Blue Ridge Mountains, connecting  
9 Shenandoah National Park's Skyline Drive in Virginia at Rockfish Gap to U.S. 441 at  
10 Oconaluftee in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park near Cherokee, North Carolina,  
11 providing visitors with stunning views and a glimpse of Appalachian history; and

12       Whereas, at the time of its construction, the Parkway was the longest road ever to be  
13 planned as a single unit in the United States; and

14       Whereas, the Parkway was a collaborative effort of the National Park Service; the  
15 federal Bureau of Public Roads (later renamed the Federal Highway Administration); New  
16 Deal agencies like the Public Works Administration, Works Progress Administration, Civilian  
17 Conservation Corps, and Resettlement Administration; the state highway departments of  
18 Virginia and North Carolina; and dozens of private road-building contractors; and

19       Whereas, R. Getty Browning, the Senior Locating and Claims Engineer for North  
20 Carolina's State Highway Commission, played a crucial role in the construction of the Parkway;  
21 and

22       Whereas, captivated by the idea of creating a parkway in late 1933, R. Getty  
23 Browning designed and personally plotted on foot the route that the road now takes through  
24 North Carolina; and

25       Whereas, in 1934, R. Getty Browning lobbied for this route in the face of opposition  
26 from residents of Tennessee and federal officials who favored another line; and

27       Whereas, for more than 25 years, R. Getty Browning personally made sure that  
28 North Carolina bought sufficient lands to protect the Parkway's views; and

29       Whereas, R. Getty Browning retired from the State Highway Commission in 1956  
30 and later worked as the Highway Commission's Federal Parkway Engineer until 1962; and

31       Whereas, R. Getty Browning died on January 30, 1966, in Blowing Rock; and

32       Whereas, the Parkway continues to be the most visited of all the 391 units in the  
33 National Park System; and



1           Whereas, the Parkway attracts over 20 million visitors annually and contributes  
2 more than \$2.3 billion annually to the region's economy; and

3           Whereas, as the Parkway celebrates its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary, it is important to raise  
4 awareness of this exceptional natural and cultural resource; and

5           Whereas, the citizens of this State are encouraged to celebrate the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary  
6 of the Blue Ridge Parkway by joining the local communities along the Parkway in participating  
7 in a series of events that focus regional and national attention on the history and stewardship of  
8 this treasure; Now, therefore,

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

10           **SECTION 1.** The General Assembly honors the memory of R. Getty Browning for  
11 his role in routing and building the Blue Ridge Parkway through Western North Carolina.

12           **SECTION 2.** The General Assembly acknowledges the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the  
13 Blue Ridge Parkway and encourages the citizens of this State to participate in activities  
14 marking this historic occasion.

15           **SECTION 3.** The Secretary of State shall transmit a certified copy of this  
16 resolution to the Superintendent of the Blue Ridge Parkway.

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