

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2015

H.J.R. 1130
May 18, 2016
HOUSE PRINCIPAL CLERK

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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION DRHJR40621-LG-143C (04/05)

Sponsors: Representatives Pittman, Speciale, Brody, and Ford (Primary Sponsors).

Referred to:

1 A JOINT RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE COMMITMENT OF THE GOVERNMENT OF
2 THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA TO THE PRINCIPLES AND THE ENFORCEMENT
3 OF THE BILL OF RIGHTS IN THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES OF
4 AMERICA, WHILE HONORING THE MEMORY OF WILLIE JONES OF HALIFAX
5 COUNTY, DAVID CALDWELL OF GUILFORD COUNTY, AND OTHER NORTH
6 CAROLINA CITIZENS AND THE INFLUENCE THEY HAD ON THE CREATION AND
7 ADOPTION OF THE BILL OF RIGHTS.

8 Whereas, the State of North Carolina was 12th among the original 13 States to ratify
9 the United States Constitution; and

10 Whereas, the State of North Carolina refused to ratify the United States Constitution
11 unless a Bill of Rights was added, guaranteeing the freedom and rights of the People and the
12 ability of the States to govern themselves in all matters in regard to which the United States
13 Constitution did not expressly grant authority to the federal government; and

14 Whereas, anti-federalists who insisted upon a Bill of Rights included Willie Jones of
15 Halifax County, who not only served as a member of the commission that drafted the first State
16 Constitution of the State of North Carolina and as a member of the House of Commons throughout
17 the Revolution, but also served one term in the Continental Congress in 1780; and

18 Whereas, David Caldwell of Guilford County, a pastor of the Buffalo and Alamance
19 Presbyterian Churches, encouraged his parishioners to participate in the American Revolution and
20 represented Guilford County in the Halifax Provincial Congress and voted, along with the
21 majority of delegates, not to ratify the United States Constitution without the addition of a Bill of
22 Rights; and

23 Whereas, some of the other North Carolinians who supported a Bill of Rights before
24 agreeing to ratify the United States Constitution were Lemuel Burkitt, Thomas Person, Samuel
25 Spencer, and Timothy Bloodworth; and

26 Whereas, the State of North Carolina ratified the United States Constitution on
27 November 21, 1789, only after a proposed Bill of Rights, in the form of 12 amendments to the
28 United States Constitution, was offered in Congress in September 1789; and

29 Whereas, the first 10 Amendments to the United States Constitution were finally
30 ratified on December 15, 1791, becoming enshrined as America's own Bill of Rights; and

31 Whereas, this Bill of Rights codifies limitations on the power of the federal
32 government of the United States, assuring the People and the States the right to govern themselves
33 in all matters in which the United States Constitution does not empower the federal government to
34 interfere; and

35 Whereas, there is a growing concern among some of our citizens that some members of
36 the federal government may not feel bound by the Bill of Rights and that some state governments



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1 may not be willing to insist upon the liberty of the People and of the States being respected and
2 upheld in accordance with the United States Constitution and the Bill of Rights; and

3 Whereas, the People of the State of North Carolina have a right to expect the
4 government of our State to adhere to and uphold the Bill of Rights in relating to the United States
5 Government and all other entities worldwide; Now, therefore,

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

7 **SECTION 1.** We, the General Assembly of the State of North Carolina, pledge to be
8 faithful to the oath we all have taken to govern in accordance with the North Carolina Constitution
9 and the United States Constitution, taking particular care to uphold the Bill of Rights in its entirety
10 in our own service to the People of North Carolina and in all of our relations with the United
11 States Government and the world.

12 **SECTION 2.** The General Assembly honors the memory of Willie Jones of Halifax
13 County, David Caldwell of Guilford County, and others for their contributions to the creation and
14 adoption of the Bill of Rights.

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