

NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL ASSEMBLY
1961 SESSION

CHAPTER 724
SENATE BILL 336

1 AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE PERPETUAL PRESERVATION OF THE LEGISLATIVE
2 CHAMBERS IN THE PRESENT CAPITOL BUILDING AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE
3 FUTURE USE AND CUSTODIAL CARE THEREOF.
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5 WHEREAS, the preservation of visible evidences of a people's history serves to
6 imbue rising generations with a lively consciousness of and respect for their beginnings and for
7 the heritage transmitted to them by their fathers to the end that the lives of each successive
8 generation are inspired and ennobled by the contemplation of the struggles, the ideals, and the
9 accomplishments of their fathers in the homeland; and

10 WHEREAS, the records in the archives of North Carolina show that for more than a
11 hundred years after the first permanent settlements of our forefathers in this geographic
12 province, there was no fixed seat of government, or capital city, or capitol building but that,
13 prior to the year 1770, the representatives of the people of North Carolina met in General
14 Assembly at irregular times and at various places as called upon by the Royal Governor, or, in
15 his absence, the President of the Council of State; and

16 WHEREAS, the first Capitol of North Carolina was The Government Palace erected
17 in the Town of New Bern during the administration of William Tryon, next to the last Royal
18 Governor of North Carolina, which edifice has been by tradition named "Tryon Palace," it
19 being also the Capitol in which Richard Caswell, the first Governor of North Carolina elected
20 under our first State Constitution (1776) was inaugurated; and the second Capitol of North
21 Carolina was the edifice called "The State House," erected in Raleigh (1792-1795), which was
22 destroyed by fire in 1831; and

23 WHEREAS, the present Capitol of North Carolina, begun in 1833 and completed
24 over a period of seven years, was dedicated in 1840 as the third Capitol of the State, being then
25 considered one of the finest State Capitols in The United States, and having since then, been
26 continuously used and enjoyed by the people of the State as their Capitol, receiving wide
27 acclaim as one of the most remarkably beautiful examples of architecture in the world; and

28 WHEREAS, the Legislative Chambers of the present State Capitol have witnessed
29 for so many years, through the times of peace and the times of strife, the coming in and the
30 going out of our fathers, whose voices pronounced the people's will as the public law and
31 whose footfalls here echo an eternal admonishment to justice and liberty under law as the
32 criterion of good government through the ages to come; and

33 WHEREAS, during the existence of the present Capitol the population of North
34 Carolina has grown from 775,000 people to more than 4,500,000; the material wealth of the
35 people has increased many fold; our cultural and religious institutions have greatly developed,
36 bringing unparalleled enlightenment and spiritual strength to the farthest reaches of our State;
37 the science of our agriculture, the genius of our industry, and the physical health and energy of
38 our populace all testify to the fact that our beginnings were well laid and the course of
39 government charted within these venerable halls has thus far fulfilled the noble hopes of those
40 who built for us; and

41 WHEREAS, the time is come when the facilities afforded by this beautiful Capitol
42 of our State for the transaction of the people's business are not commodious enough to provide
43 convenient space for both the Executive and the Legislative branches of our government,

1 provision having been made for erecting a new building to be occupied completely and
2 exclusively by the Legislative Branch from and after the convening of the next Regular Session
3 of the General Assembly in 1963; Now, therefore,
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5 The General Assembly of North Carolina do enact:
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7 **Section 1.** As soon as the General Assembly shall have moved into the new
8 Legislative Building, the present Legislative Chambers in the Capitol shall be placed in custody
9 of the State Department of Archives and History to be preserved as historic shrines for the
10 edification of the present and future generations. Insofar as practicable, the aforesaid
11 Legislative Chambers shall be maintained and preserved in the conditions in which they now
12 are and shall be used exclusively for the purpose of historic shrines and as public attractions;
13 provided, however, that the initial and final meetings of each Regular or Special Session of the
14 General Assembly may commence and adjourn sine die in the aforesaid Legislative Chambers
15 as a ceremony in perpetuan rei memoriam.

16 **Sec. 2.** The State Department of Archives and History is hereby entrusted with the
17 responsibility herein specified, as being the agency with the experience and staff best qualified
18 to preserve historic sites and shrines in suitable manner. However, for the purposes of carrying
19 out the provisions of this Act, it is hereby directed that such cooperation and assistance shall be
20 made available to the said Department of Archives and History, and such labor supplied as may
21 be feasible, by the General Services Division of the Department of Administration.

22 **Sec. 3.** All laws and clauses of laws in conflict with this Act are hereby repealed.

23 **Sec. 4.** This Act shall be in full force and effect from and after its ratification.

24 In the General Assembly read three times and ratified, this the 13th day of June,
25 1961.