

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA

SESSION 1995

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SENATE BILL 1205*

Short Title: Princeville Cemetery/Funds.

(Public)

Sponsors: Senator Martin of Pitt.

Referred to: Rules and Operation of the Senate.

May 16, 1996

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT TO PROVIDE THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL RESOURCES
3 SHALL STUDY THE HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PRINCEVILLE
4 CEMETERY AND TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS FOR THE STUDY.

Whereas, the town of Princeville, incorporated on February 20, 1885, has the distinction of being not only the oldest incorporated African-American community in North Carolina, but also the oldest incorporated African-American municipality on the North American continent; and

Whereas, some of Princeville's most influential citizens included Robert Taylor, a school teacher who served as county justice of peace, a two-term State Senator, and editor of the Edgecombe Watchman and William Mason, a teacher and minister who was elected to the State House of Representatives and the Senate and was a member to the North Carolina Constitutional Convention of 1875; and

Whereas, Princeville was named for Turner Prince, who had been born a slave in North Carolina in 1843 and was one of the town's earliest residents; and

Whereas, the history of Princeville, its founders, and its earliest citizens is unique and significant; and

Whereas, the cemetery in Princeville is the eternal resting place of some of Princeville's early citizens, former slaves whose contribution in establishing the first African-American community in North America is noteworthy; and

Whereas, the cemetery of Princeville should be preserved and its historical significance documented; Now, therefore,

1 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

2 Section 1. The Department of Cultural Resources shall study the historical
3 significance of the cemetery located in Princeville, the oldest African-American
4 community in North America, shall consider what efforts should be taken to preserve and
5 maintain the cemetery, and shall also consider whether the cemetery should be nominated
6 to the National Register of Historic Places. The Department of Cultural Resources shall
7 report its findings and recommendations to the 1997 General Assembly.

8 Sec. 2. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of
9 Cultural Resources the sum of one thousand dollars (\$1,000) for the 1996-97 fiscal year
10 to implement this act.

11 Sec. 3. This act becomes effective July 1, 1996.