

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA

**SESSION 2003
RATIFIED BILL**

**RESOLUTION 2004-2
HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 1435**

A JOINT RESOLUTION HONORING THE LIFE AND MEMORY OF JAMES WESLEY "WILLIE" YORK, PROMINENT CIVIC LEADER, VISIONARY BUILDER, AND ENTREPRENEUR.

Whereas, James Wesley "Willie" York was born on September 11, 1912, in Raleigh, North Carolina, to Charles Vance York and Mabel Anderson York; and

Whereas, Willie York was educated in the Raleigh public schools; and in 1923 at age 11 commenced under his father's tutelage a building and business career that lasted for the next 80 years; and graduated from the North Carolina State College of Agriculture and Engineering (now North Carolina State University) in 1933 with a B.S. degree in Construction Engineering; and

Whereas, Willie York served his country during the Great Depression as an engineer for the Bureau of Public Roads and as a purchasing agent for the Civilian Conservation Corps in the Great Smoky Mountains; and

Whereas, Willie York served his country during World War II as a builder at Cherry Point Marine Base, Camp Lejeune, and Morehead City, North Carolina; and

Whereas, Willie York was a visionary builder of communities that transformed his native city with such projects as the revolutionary 1949 Cameron Village, York Industrial Park, 1955 Farmer's Market, Velvet Cloak Inn, and Mission Valley Inn and Shopping Center; and

Whereas, Willie York served the city's schoolchildren as a member of the Raleigh School Board from 1957 until 1963 and opened educational opportunities to all of the city's children with his deciding vote to integrate Murphey School in 1960; and

Whereas, Willie York served the citizens of North Carolina as Chair of the North Carolina Board of Conservation and Development from 1965 until 1969 and inaugurated the State's first system of Welcome Centers for the traveling public; and

Whereas, Willie York was instrumental in securing State support and funding for the development and construction of the James B. Hunt Horse Complex that serves North Carolina's expanding equine industry; and

Whereas, Willie York served as Chair of the Raleigh-Durham Airport Authority and in that capacity played a significant role in completing the construction of a major runway and terminal building in 1984; and

Whereas, Willie York was a lifelong devoted supporter of North Carolina State University and was awarded the Watauga Medal in 1990, and contributed the York Auditorium at the McSwain Education Center at the university's J.C. Raulston Arboretum, and was instrumental in establishing the 600-acre Yates Mill County Historic Park in a partnership with the university and Wake County; and

Whereas, Willie York's devotion to improving the lives of others earned him the respect and admiration of all who knew and worked with him; and

Whereas, Willie York's influence in his community and his keen problem-solving ability made him a favorite among politicians and civic leaders, who often sought his advice and counsel; and

Whereas, Willie York was a devoted son of his native city of Raleigh and took every opportunity to share his knowledge of and enthusiasm for local history; and

Whereas, Willie York died on March 2, 2004; Now, therefore,

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

SECTION 1. The General Assembly honors the memory of James Wesley "Willie" York and expresses the appreciation of this State for his life, accomplishments, and service.

SECTION 2. The General Assembly extends its deepest sympathy to the family of James Wesley "Willie" York for the loss of their beloved family member.

SECTION 3. The Secretary of State shall transmit a certified copy of this resolution to the family of James Wesley "Willie" York.

SECTION 4. This resolution is effective upon ratification.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 3rd day of June, 2004.

Beverly E. Perdue
President of the Senate

James B. Black
Speaker of the House of Representatives