

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA**  
**SESSION 2005**

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**SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION DRSJR75301-LG-238 (04/06)**

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Sponsors:    Senator Snow.

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Referred to:

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1    A JOINT RESOLUTION HONORING THE LIFE AND MEMORY OF WILLIAM  
2        HOLLAND THOMAS, FORMER MEMBER OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY,  
3        ON THE 200<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF HIS BIRTH.

4            Whereas, William Holland Thomas was born on February 5, 1805, in  
5    Haywood County; and

6            Whereas, William Holland Thomas was the son of Richard Thomas, a  
7    Revolutionary War veteran, who died before he was born, and Temperance Calvert  
8    Thomas; and

9            Whereas, as a young boy, William Holland Thomas befriended members of  
10   the local Oconaluftee Indians or Qualla Clan, which later became the Eastern Band of  
11   Cherokee Indians; and

12            Whereas, as a teenager, William Holland Thomas began working at a local  
13   trading post near his home, during which time he learned the Cherokee language and  
14   customs; and

15            Whereas, William Holland Thomas developed a mutual friendship with Chief  
16   Yonaguska and was later adopted by the Chief as a member of the Eastern Band of  
17   Cherokee Indians; and

18            Whereas, at the age of 15, William Holland Thomas became an attorney after  
19   studying from a set of law books that was given to him while he was working at the  
20   trading post; and

21            Whereas, as an adult, William Holland Thomas was an influential man in his  
22   community and the Western portion of the State; and

23            Whereas, in addition to practicing law, William Holland Thomas was also a  
24   businessman, building stores, turnpikes, and railroads; and

25            Whereas, during the 1830s, William Holland Thomas served as an agent for  
26   the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, traveling to Washington, DC, to persuade the  
27   federal government to allow them to remain in North Carolina and to defend their  
28   claims for financial payments promised them; and

1           Whereas, William Holland Thomas was successful in helping the Eastern  
2 Bank of Cherokee Indians win the right to be treated as citizens of North Carolina, to  
3 govern themselves in their own communities, and to become landowners; and

4           Whereas, upon the death of Chief Yonaguska in 1839, William Holland  
5 Thomas was named Chief of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, a title he held for  
6 28 years; and

7           Whereas, prior to his death, William Holland Thomas recounted his life with  
8 the Cherokees to a Smithsonian Institute ethnologist, James Mooney, which greatly  
9 contributed to the preservation of the history and culture of the Eastern Band of  
10 Cherokee Indians; and

11           Whereas, William Holland Thomas served as a State senator from 1848 to  
12 1861; and

13           Whereas, during the Civil War, William Holland Thomas served as Colonel  
14 of a unit known as Thomas' Legion, which consisted of several regiments, including two  
15 composed of Cherokee Indians; and

16           Whereas, William Holland Thomas was married to Sarah Love and together  
17 they had three children, William H. Thomas, Jr., James Robert Thomas, and Sallie Love  
18 Thomas; and

19           Whereas, after a number of years of declining health and hospital  
20 confinement, William Holland Thomas died on May 10, 1893; and

21           Whereas, to celebrate the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of William Holland  
22 Thomas, the Cashiers Historical Society will hold a symposium, entitled "The Life and  
23 Times of William Holland Thomas" on May 5, 6, and 7, 2005; Now, therefore,  
24 Be it resolved by the Senate, the House of Representatives concurring:

25           **SECTION 1.** The General Assembly honors the life and memory of William  
26 Holland Thomas and acknowledges his service to the State and the Eastern Band of  
27 Cherokee Indians.

28           **SECTION 2.** The General Assembly encourages the citizens of this State to  
29 join the Cashiers Historical Society in celebrating the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of  
30 William Holland Thomas.

31           **SECTION 3.** The Secretary of State shall transmit a certified copy of this  
32 resolution to the Cashiers Historical Society.

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