

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2005**

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SENATE RESOLUTION DRSR55017-LG-48 (2/2)

Sponsors: Senator Jenkins.

Referred to:

1 A SENATE RESOLUTION HONORING GEORGE HENRY WHITE, FORMER
2 MEMBER OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND THE UNITED STATES
3 HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

4 Whereas, George Henry White was born a slave on December 18, 1852, in
5 Bladen County; and

6 Whereas, George Henry White was educated at the Whitten School in
7 Lumberton, North Carolina, and graduated from Howard University in 1877; and

8 Whereas, George Henry White, after graduating from college, returned to
9 North Carolina where he settled in New Bern and served as a teacher, principal, and
10 attorney from 1877 to 1894; and

11 Whereas, George Henry White served with honor and distinction as a
12 member of the General Assembly after being elected to the North Carolina House of
13 Representatives in 1880 and to the North Carolina Senate in 1884; and

14 Whereas, George Henry White served two four-year terms as a State District
15 Attorney for the Second Judicial District of North Carolina beginning in 1886, during
16 which time he was the only African-American district attorney in the United States; and

17 Whereas, George Henry White and his family moved to Tarboro in 1894, and
18 subsequently he was elected to two terms in the United States House of Representatives
19 from the Second Congressional District in 1896 and 1898; and

20 Whereas, George Henry White was the only African-American in the United
21 States Congress during his two terms and was the highest ranking elected
22 African-American in the United States, thereby representing not only all the citizens of
23 the Second Congressional District of North Carolina but also all 10 million
24 African-Americans in the country who had no voice in Congress at that time; and

25 Whereas, George Henry White was the last African-American to serve in
26 Congress until 1928 and the last African-American to be elected from the South until
27 after the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965; and

1 Whereas, George Henry White was known as an eloquent speaker and, prior
2 to his departure from Congress, gave his farewell speech on January 29, 1901, in which
3 he said: "This, Mr. Chairman, is perhaps the Negroes temporary farewell to the
4 American Congress; but let me say, phoenix-like he will rise up someday and come
5 again. These parting words are in behalf of an outraged, heartbroken, bruised, and
6 bleeding, but God-fearing people, faithful, industrious, loyal, rising people—full of
7 potential force."; and

8 Whereas, George Henry White moved to Philadelphia in 1905, where he
9 practiced law and founded the first black-managed bank in the city; and

10 Whereas, George Henry White died in 1918, but his service to this State and
11 nation during a time of great conflict and unrest continues to inspire and encourage
12 many; and

13 Whereas, George Henry White recently received a long overdue honor when
14 a post office in Tarboro was named for him, and a portrait of him was hung in the
15 Edgecombe County Courthouse; Now, therefore,

16 Be it resolved by the Senate:

17 **SECTION 1.** The Senate honors the life of George Henry White and
18 acknowledges the accomplishments and public service of this great native son.

19 **SECTION 2.** This resolution is effective upon adoption.