

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

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**HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION DRHJR10151-LG-132 (03/04)**

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Sponsors: Representative Owens.

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Referred to:

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1 A JOINT RESOLUTION HONORING THOSE WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THE  
2 CONSTRUCTION OF THE DISMAL SWAMP CANAL ON THE TWO  
3 HUNDRETH ANNIVERSARY OF THIS HISTORIC LANDMARK.

4 Whereas, the Dismal Swamp Canal is a 22-mile waterway that serves as part  
5 of the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway; and

6 Whereas, the Dismal Swamp Canal is the oldest man-made continuously  
7 operating waterway in the country, opening to boating traffic in 1805; and

8 Whereas, Colonel William Byrd II proposed the Dismal Swamp Canal in  
9 1728 after surveying the boundary between North Carolina and Virginia; and

10 Whereas, in 1793, slaves and other laborers began the arduous task of digging  
11 the canal by hand, completing the work approximately 12 years later; and

12 Whereas, the Dismal Swamp Canal is a living monument to the sacrifices of  
13 the men who built it; and

14 Whereas, one of those men was Moses Grandy, born into slavery in Camden  
15 County around 1786, who after many years of working on the canal was able to  
16 purchase his freedom with a portion of his earnings and whose life story was recorded  
17 in the 1843 narrative, "The Life of Moses Grandy; Late a Slave in the United States of  
18 America;" and

19 Whereas, today, the Dismal Swamp Canal attracts approximately 2,000  
20 pleasure boats annually; and

21 Whereas, the Dismal Swamp Canal is listed on the National Register of  
22 Historic Places, designated as a National Historic Civil Engineering Landmark and  
23 recognized as part of the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Program;  
24 and

25 Whereas, partners in a year-long celebration of the Dismal Swamp Canal's  
26 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary are the Dismal Swamp Canal Welcome Center, Dismal Swamp State  
27 Park and Natural Area, Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge, Virginia Canals  
28 and Navigations Society, City of Chesapeake, and Elizabeth City State University; and

1           Whereas, future plans for the Dismal Swamp Canal include the Dismal  
2 Swamp State Park, which will be made possible due to the efforts of the late Dr. Joseph  
3 Armstrong Gill, a conservationist and avid outdoorsman, who was instrumental in  
4 persuading the State to purchase land in the Great Dismal Swamp for use as a park;

5 Now, therefore,

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

7           **SECTION 1.** The General Assembly honors the memory of Moses Grandy  
8 and the many other laborers who constructed the Dismal Swamp Canal.

9           **SECTION 2.** The General Assembly honors the memory of Dr. Joseph  
10 Armstrong Gill for his role in helping the creation of the future Dismal Swamp State  
11 Park.

12           **SECTION 3.** The General Assembly encourages the citizens of this State to  
13 take part in activities commemorating the 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Dismal Swamp  
14 Canal.

15           **SECTION 4.** The Secretary of State shall transmit a certified copy of this  
16 resolution to the Dismal Swamp Canal Welcome Center.

17           **SECTION 5.** This resolution is effective upon ratification.