

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2013

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HOUSE RESOLUTION 1265

Sponsors: Representatives Terry and Farmer-Butterfield (Primary Sponsors).

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Referred to: Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House.

June 13, 2014

1 A HOUSE RESOLUTION HONORING THE LIFE AND MEMORY OF DR. MAYA
2 ANGELOU, POET, NOVELIST, EDUCATOR, ACTRESS, HISTORIAN, FILMMAKER,
3 MENTOR, AND CIVIL RIGHTS LEADER.

4 Whereas, Maya Angelou was born Marguerite Annie Johnson on April 4, 1928, in
5 St. Louis, Missouri; and

6 Whereas, Maya Angelou lived in Stamps, Arkansas, prior to moving to San
7 Francisco; and

8 Whereas, Maya Angelou studied dance and drama at San Francisco's California
9 Labor School and graduated from George Washington High School; and

10 Whereas, during her early years, Maya Angelou held a number of jobs, including
11 serving as San Francisco's first African-American female cable car conductor, a cook, and a
12 nightclub singer; and

13 Whereas, during the mid-1950s, Maya Angelou toured Europe with a production of
14 the opera "Porgy and Bess," studied modern dance with Martha Graham, and danced with
15 Alvin Ailey on television variety shows; and

16 Whereas, Maya Angelou recorded her first record album, Calypso Lady, in 1957;
17 and

18 Whereas, Maya Angelou moved to New York in 1958, where she joined the Harlem
19 Writers Guild, and later performed in the historic off-Broadway production of Jean Genet's
20 "The Blacks" with cast members that included James Earl Jones, Louis Gossett, Jr., and Cicely
21 Tyson; and

22 Whereas, during the early 1960s, Maya Angelou lived in Cairo, Egypt, where she
23 was the editor of an English language magazine, and in Ghana, where she taught at a local
24 university; and

25 Whereas, during her years abroad, Maya Angelou mastered several languages,
26 including French, Spanish, Italian, and Arabic; and

27 Whereas, Maya Angelou was active in the Civil Rights Movement and was a
28 personal friend of both Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and Malcolm X; and

29 Whereas, in 1970, Maya Angelou gained international fame after publishing her
30 critically acclaimed memoir, "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings," which was nominated for
31 the National Book Award; and

32 Whereas, Maya Angelou has published more than 30 best-selling titles, including
33 her collection of poems, "Just Give Me a Cool Drink of Water 'Fore I Die," which earned her a
34 Pulitzer Prize nomination; and



1 Whereas, Maya Angelou was the first African-American female director in
2 Hollywood and wrote the screenplay and composed the score for the 1972 film, "Georgia,
3 Georgia;" and

4 Whereas, Maya Angelou also wrote and produced several prize-winning
5 documentaries, including "Afro-Americans in the Arts," a PBS special for which she received
6 the Golden Eagle Award; and

7 Whereas, Maya Angelou appeared in several television shows and films, including
8 the landmark television adaptation of Alex Haley's "Roots" in 1977 and John Singleton's
9 "Poetic Justice" in 1993, and she directed her first feature film, "Down in the Delta," in 1996;
10 and

11 Whereas, Maya Angelou served in various capacities to several presidents of the
12 United States, including President Gerald Ford, who appointed her to the American Revolution
13 Bicentennial Commission, and President Jimmy Carter, who appointed her to serve on the
14 Presidential Commission for the International Year of the Woman; and

15 Whereas, at the request of President Bill Clinton, Maya Angelou composed what
16 has become one of her most well-known poems, "On the Pulse of the Morning," which she read
17 during his 1993 inauguration; and

18 Whereas, Maya Angelou taught at Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, North
19 Carolina, as Reynolds Professor of American Studies for over 30 years; and

20 Whereas, Maya Angelou received a number of other honors and awards, including
21 the Presidential Medal of the Arts in 2000; the Ford's Theatre Lincoln Medal in 2008; the
22 Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2011; over 50 honorary degrees; and three Grammy Awards;
23 and

24 Whereas, Maya Angelou died on May 28, 2014, at the age of 86; and

25 Whereas, Maya Angelou is survived by her son, daughter-in-law, two grandsons,
26 two great-grandchildren, a nephew, a niece, grandnieces, great-grandnieces, grandnephews,
27 great-grandnephews, and a host of beloveds; and

28 Whereas, Maya Angelou was an extraordinary woman, who inspired countless
29 others, and will be remembered for her many talents and lasting legacy; Now, therefore,
30 Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

31 **SECTION 1.** The House of Representatives honors the memory of Dr. Maya
32 Angelou and expresses the appreciation of the citizens of this State for her contributions to the
33 arts, literature, and history.

34 **SECTION 2.** The House of Representatives extends its deepest sympathy to the
35 family of Dr. Maya Angelou for the loss of a beloved family member.

36 **SECTION 3.** The Principal Clerk shall transmit a certified copy of this resolution
37 to the family of Dr. Maya Angelou.

38 **SECTION 4.** This resolution is effective upon adoption.