

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA**

**SESSION 1991**

**S**

**1**

**SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 1275**

---

Sponsors: Senator Ballance.

---

Referred to: Passed 1st Reading; Calendar for 7/20/92

---

July 15, 1992

1 A JOINT RESOLUTION HONORING THE LIFE AND MEMORY OF THE  
2 HONORABLE JOSEPH BRANCH, FORMER CHIEF JUSTICE OF THE NORTH  
3 CAROLINA SUPREME COURT AND STATE LEGISLATOR.

4       Whereas, Joseph Branch was born in Enfield, North Carolina, on July 5,  
5 1915, to James C. Branch and Laura Applewhite Branch; and

6       Whereas, Joseph Branch was educated at Enfield High School, Wake Forest  
7 College, and at the Wake Forest College School of Law, where he received an LL.B. in  
8 1938; and

9       Whereas, Joseph Branch served his country in the United States Armed  
10 Forces from 1943 to 1945; and

11       Whereas, Joseph Branch practiced law in Enfield from 1938 to 1966; and

12       Whereas, Joseph Branch's distinguished public service to North Carolina  
13 began in 1947, when he was first elected to the North Carolina House of  
14 Representatives and then continued to serve four consecutive terms; and

15       Whereas, Joseph Branch served as legislative counsel to Governor Luther H.  
16 Hodges in 1957 and to Governor Dan K. Moore in 1965; and

17       Whereas, Joseph Branch's contributions as a jurist began in 1966, when  
18 Governor Dan K. Moore appointed him as an Associate Justice of the North Carolina  
19 Supreme Court; and

20       Whereas, in 1968, Joseph Branch was elected to a full term on the North  
21 Carolina Supreme Court and reelected to a full term in 1976; and

22       Whereas, in 1979, Governor James B. Hunt appointed Joseph Branch as  
23 Chief Justice of the North Carolina Supreme Court; and

1           Whereas, in 1980, Joseph Branch was elected to fill an unexpired term on the  
2 North Carolina Supreme Court and, in 1982, he was elected to a full term; and

3           Whereas, Joseph Branch served his community as a member of the Masonic  
4 Order, the Enfield Lions Club, and as the attorney for the Halifax County Board of  
5 Education; and

6           Whereas, Joseph Branch served as a trustee and former chairman of the  
7 Board of Trustees of Wake Forest University, as a member of the Board of Visitors of  
8 Wake Forest University School of Law, and as a former trustee of Wesleyan College;  
9 and

10          Whereas, Joseph Branch was an important member of the Democratic Party,  
11 serving as former Chairman of the Halifax County Democratic Party; and

12          Whereas, Joseph Branch was a member of the Halifax County Car  
13 Association, the North Carolina Bar Association, and the American Bar Association;  
14 and

15          Whereas, Joseph Branch received a number of awards and honors, including  
16 an Honorary Doctor of Human Letters Degree from Elon College in 1984; an Honorary  
17 Doctor of Laws Degree from both Wake Forest University in 1983 and from Campbell  
18 University in 1981; Outstanding Appellate Judge from the North Carolina Academy of  
19 Trial Lawyers in 1981; the Carroll Wayland Weathers Distinguished Alumni Award  
20 from Wake Forest University in 1980; the Distinguished Service in Law Citation from  
21 Wake Forest University in 1975; and the Outstanding Service Alumni Award from  
22 Wake Forest University in 1971; and

23          Whereas, Joseph Branch was a former member of the Enfield Baptist Church,  
24 where he served as deacon, and a member of Hayes Barton Baptist Church in Raleigh;  
25 and

26          Whereas, the family and friends of Joseph Branch, as well as the State of  
27 North Carolina, suffered a great loss with his death; and

28          Whereas, Joseph Branch is survived by his wife, Frances Jane Kitchen  
29 Branch and his children, Jane Branch McRee and James C. Branch; and

30          Whereas, the General Assembly wishes to honor the memory of Joseph  
31 Branch and recognize his many years of public service to the people of this State and of  
32 the United States;

33 Now, therefore, be it resolved by the Senate, the House of Representatives concurring:

34          Section 1. The General Assembly honors the memory of Joseph Branch, a  
35 distinguished jurist and legislator, for his dedication and life-long career of public  
36 service and for his many contributions to the legislative and judicial systems of the State  
37 of North Carolina.

38          Sec. 2. The General Assembly expresses its sympathy to the family and  
39 friends of Joseph Branch for their loss.

40          Sec. 3. The Secretary of State shall transmit a certified copy of this resolution  
41 to the family of Joseph Branch.

42          Sec. 4. This resolution is effective upon ratification.