

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA

SESSION 1997

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HOUSE BILL 552*

Short Title: 1898 Wilmington Historic Funds.

(Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Wright; Adams, Blue, Bonner, Boyd-McIntyre, Braswell, Cunningham, Earle, Fitch, Hardaway, H. Hunter, Kinney, McAllister, Michaux, Oldham, Wainwright, and Womble.

Referred to: Appropriations.

March 19, 1997

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1 AN ACT TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS TO THE DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL
2 RESOURCES FOR A MEMORIAL TO COMMEMORATE THE HISTORIC
3 EVENTS OF NOVEMBER OF 1898 IN THE CITY OF WILMINGTON.
4

5 Whereas, during the late 1800s, the City of Wilmington was North Carolina's
6 largest city with African-Americans making up two-thirds of the city's population; and

7 Whereas, many of the African-American citizens owned valuable land and
8 successful businesses and held high offices in city and county government, comprising a
9 thriving black middle and upper class; and

10 Whereas, after the elections of 1898, a group of racist local residents instigated
11 a three-day period of civil disorder and violence against African-American citizens and
12 public officials, resulting in the loss of lives, the destruction of businesses, and the
13 expulsion of duly elected officials and business owners from the city; and

14 Whereas, 1998 will mark the one hundredth anniversary of the tragic and
15 lawless events that occurred in November of 1898 in the City of Wilmington; and

16 Whereas, a diverse group of interested citizens have formed the "1898
17 Centennial Commission" to observe and memorialize these events through numerous
18 civic activities; Now, therefore,

1 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

2 Section 1. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of
3 Cultural Resources, Division of Archives and History, the sum of one hundred thousand
4 dollars (\$100,000) for the 1997-98 fiscal year to establish a permanent memorial to
5 commemorate the historical significance of the 1898 riots in the City of Wilmington.

6 Section 2. This act becomes effective July 1, 1997.