

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2009**

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**HOUSE BILL 1021
PROPOSED COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE H1021-PCS70426-RW-40**

Short Title: U.S. 17/U.S.70 Marine Corps Parkway.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

April 2, 2009

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1 AN ACT TO DESIGNATE A PORTION OF U.S. HIGHWAY 17 AND U.S. HIGHWAY 70
2 AS "THE U.S. MARINE CORPS PARKWAY: HOME OF THE CAROLINA MARINES
3 SINCE 1941."
4

5 Whereas, during 1940, amid the escalating mobilization of World War II, the 1st
6 Marine Division and the 1st Marine Air Wings of the United States Marine Corps were in need
7 of an operational staging area on the east coast of the United States; and

8 Whereas, in the summer of 1940, Major John C. McQueen and his pilot, Captain
9 Verne McCaul, on the orders of then Major General Thomas Holcomb, Marine Corps
10 Commandant, undertook an aerial survey that covered the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts from
11 Norfolk, Virginia, to Corpus Christi, Texas, and determined that 14 miles of beach in Onslow
12 County, North Carolina, was the only suitable location for a Marine Corps base in the Eastern
13 United States; and

14 Whereas, in February 1941, President Roosevelt authorized an initial outlay of
15 \$1,500,000 for the survey and purchase of a 174-square-mile tract near Jacksonville, North
16 Carolina, and on April 5, 1941, the United States Congress authorized \$14,575,000 for the
17 base's construction; and

18 Whereas, on May 1, 1941, the Marine Barracks New River was formally established
19 as a major amphibious training ground and has grown since into the Marine Corps Base, Camp
20 Lejeune, partly bounded by Highway 17 in Jacksonville, North Carolina; and

21 Whereas, from April 1942 until desegregation of the Marine Corps in 1949,
22 Montford Point Camp in North Carolina was the exclusive training grounds for
23 African-American Marines; and

24 Whereas, from 1943 until passage of the "Women's Armed Service Integration Act"
25 in 1948, the New River Base was the principal training center for the women Marines, having
26 trained over 20,000 women Marines; and

27 Whereas, in 1944 the United States Marine Corps assumed control of Camp Davis
28 at Holly Ridge when the United States Army declared it excess to their needs and utilized it to
29 train the Royal Netherlands Marine Corps; and

30 Whereas, other sites along or near Highway 17 in Eastern North Carolina have
31 historical significance to the United States Marine Corps, including major air stations at Cherry
32 Point and Edenton, North Carolina, and auxiliary or outlying landing fields at Atlantic Beach,
33 Beaufort, Bogue, Greenville, Manteo, New River, Oak Grove, Washington, and Wilson; and



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1 Whereas, the Museum of the Marine currently being planned at Camp Lejeune in
2 Jacksonville, North Carolina, will honor the history of the Carolina Marines from World War II
3 to the present and highlight the many historically significant locations along Highway 17; and

4 Whereas, estimates show that the Museum of the Marine has the potential to draw
5 100,000 visitors each year, and the designation of Highway 17 as a scenic byway will add to
6 this attraction; and

7 Whereas, the General Assembly desires to honor the United States Marine Corps'
8 large and enduring military presence at locations in Eastern North Carolina along Highway 17;
9 Now, therefore,

10 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

11 **SECTION 1.** U.S. Highway 17 running between the Town of Holly Ridge and the
12 Town of Edenton, and the portion of U.S. Highway 70 running between the intersection of U.S.
13 Highway 70 and N.C. Highway 101 near Cherry Point Marine Corp Air Station and the
14 intersection of U.S. Highway 70 and U.S. Highway 17 is designated as "The U.S. Marine Corps
15 Parkway: Home of Carolina Marines since 1941" in light of the historical contributions of the
16 United States Marine Corps.

17 **SECTION 2.** The Department of Transportation shall collaborate with the
18 Highway 17 Association, the Department of Commerce, and the Department of Cultural
19 Resources concerning the appropriate signage along the Parkway designated in this act, in order
20 to maximize the economic development opportunities along the route of the Parkway. The
21 Department of Transportation may contract with nongovernmental entities to produce, install,
22 and maintain the signs.

23 **SECTION 3.** This act is effective when it becomes law.