

1 Whereas, the Virginia opossum is native to North Carolina and is the only marsupial
2 found in North America; the female carries its underdeveloped young in a pouch until they are
3 capable of living independently, similar to a kangaroo; and

4 Whereas, the Virginia opossum is one of the oldest and most primitive species of
5 mammal found in North America; and

6 Whereas, the Virginia opossum is about the size of a large house cat with a
7 triangular head; a long pointed nose; dark eyes; a long, scaly, prehensile tail; and short, black,
8 leathery ears; and

9 Whereas, the Virginia opossum is nocturnal and lives in a wide variety of habitats,
10 including deciduous forests, open woods, and farmland but prefers wet areas such as marshes,
11 swamps, and streams; and

12 Whereas, at age 65, Vollis Simpson, a self-taught folk artist, began making giant
13 windmills known as "whirligigs" at his home in Wilson, North Carolina; and

14 Whereas, Mr. Simpson's whirligigs have been exhibited at the North Carolina
15 Museum of Art in Raleigh, the High Museum of Art in Atlanta, Georgia, and the Visionary Art
16 Museum in Baltimore, Maryland, and at other locations, including New York, California,
17 Canada, and England; and

18 Whereas, Mr. Simpson and details of his artwork have been featured in many
19 national magazines and in several books; and

20 Whereas, the City of Wilson is developing the Vollis Simpson Whirligig Park to
21 display a large collection of these whirligigs in historic downtown, which will be a
22 one-of-a-kind destination for visitors; and

23 Whereas, North Carolina's clay-rich soil has contributed to the State's pottery
24 heritage; and

25 Whereas, the use of clay has grown from the State's early Native Americans making
26 mostly utilitarian wares and European settlers continuing the traditions of their ancestors to
27 today's potters designing pottery with utilitarian and aesthetic elements; and

28 Whereas, the pottery tradition continues to thrive in North Carolina, especially in
29 the Seagrove area, which includes parts of Chatham, Lee, Moore, Montgomery, and Randolph
30 Counties; and

31 Whereas, clay continues to be an important art medium contributing to the State's
32 cultural, social, and economic prosperity; Now, therefore,
33 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

34 **SECTION 1.** Chapter 145 of the General Statutes is amended by adding the
35 following new sections to read:

36 **"§ 145-41. State fossil.**

37 The fossilized teeth of the megalodon shark is adopted as the official fossil of the State of
38 North Carolina.

39 **"§ 145-42. State frog.**

40 The pine barrens tree frog (*Hyla andersonii*) is adopted as the official frog of the State of
41 North Carolina.

42 **"§ 145-43. State salamander.**

43 The marbled salamander (*Ambystoma opacum*) is adopted as the official salamander of the
44 State of North Carolina.

45 **"§ 145-44. State marsupial.**

46 The Virginia opossum (*Didelphis virginiana*) is adopted as the official marsupial of the
47 State of North Carolina.

48 **"§ 145-45. State folk art.**

49 The whirligigs created by Vollis Simpson are adopted as the official folk art of the State of
50 North Carolina.

51 **"§ 145-46. State art medium.**

1 Clay is adopted as the official art medium of the State of North Carolina."
2 **SECTION 2.** This act is effective when it becomes law.