

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2023

H.B. 480  
Mar 23, 2023  
HOUSE PRINCIPAL CLERK

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HOUSE BILL DRH10225-LG-105

Short Title: Adopt Doc Watson Day. (Public)

Sponsors: Representative Pickett.

Referred to:

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
2 AN ACT ADOPTING THE THIRD DAY OF MARCH OF EACH YEAR AS DOC WATSON  
3 DAY IN HONOR OF ARTHEL LANE "DOC" WATSON.

4 Whereas, Arthel Lane "Doc" Watson was born on March 3, 1923, in Stony Fork near  
5 Deep Gap, in Watauga County, North Carolina, and died on May 29, 2012, in Winston-Salem,  
6 North Carolina; and

7 Whereas, Doc Watson was a guitarist, banjoist, singer, and songwriter of bluegrass,  
8 country, folk, roots, and gospel music, renowned for his fingerpicking and flatpicking skills; and

9 Whereas, Doc Watson, blind from his second birthday, attended the Governor  
10 Morehead School in Raleigh, North Carolina, and received an honorary Doctor of Music degree  
11 from Berklee College of Music in 2010; and

12 Whereas, Doc Watson's musical career spanned over half a century and is most  
13 positively identified with his promoting and preserving of Appalachian and old-time folk music  
14 passed down through an oral tradition in the North Carolina mountains; and

15 Whereas, Doc Watson's talent and technical proficiency led to collaborations and  
16 performances with numerous legendary recording artists, including Bill Monroe, Lester Flatt,  
17 Earl Scruggs, Tony Rice, Chet Atkins, Del McCoury, and David Grisman, among others; and

18 Whereas, Doc Watson, in 1988, founded the music festival MerleFest, annually held  
19 on the campus of Wilkes Community College in Wilkesboro, North Carolina, in memory of his  
20 late son and performing partner, Eddy Merle Watson, and as a fundraiser for Wilkes Community  
21 College; and

22 Whereas, Doc Watson won seven Grammy Awards; a Grammy Lifetime  
23 Achievement Award in 2004; the National Medal of Arts, presented by President Bill Clinton in  
24 1997; and a National Heritage Fellowship in 1998; and

25 Whereas, Doc Watson received the North Carolina Award in 1986 for Fine Arts; a  
26 North Carolina Folk Heritage Award in 1986; the Order of the Long Leaf Pine in 1999; and was  
27 inducted into the International Bluegrass Music Hall of Fame in 2000 and the North Carolina  
28 Music Hall of Fame in 2010; and

29 Whereas, in honor of Doc Watson's centennial birthday and in recognition of his  
30 promotion and preservation of North Carolina's musical heritage, it is fitting to designate March  
31 3rd of each year as Doc Watson Day in North Carolina; Now, therefore,

32 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

33 **SECTION 1.** Chapter 103 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new  
34 section to read:

35 "**§ 103-17. Doc Watson Day.**

36 The third day of March of each year is designated as Doc Watson Day in North Carolina."



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**SECTION 2.** This act is effective when it becomes law.