

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2009
RATIFIED BILL**

**RESOLUTION 2009-2
SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 110**

A JOINT RESOLUTION HONORING THE LIFE AND MEMORY OF THOMAS GHIO "SONNY BOY" JOYNER, WHILE JOINING THE CITIZENS OF WELDON IN RECOGNIZING THE TOWN AS THE ROCKFISH CAPITAL OF THE WORLD.

Whereas, in 1873, the United States Fish Commission (USFC) discovered that striped bass, known as rockfish, were good candidates for propagation and could help to restore the dwindling supply of fish used as a food source; and

Whereas, in 1938, the USFC opened the only known Rockfish Hatchery at that time in the Town of Weldon, which is located adjacent to the Roanoke River; and

Whereas, as a result of the hatchery, the rockfish population in the Town of Weldon increased significantly; and

Whereas, each year between the months of March and June, millions of rockfish migrate up the Roanoke River to spawn in the Town of Weldon; and

Whereas, the rockfish migration season attracts thousands of anglers and outdoors enthusiasts from around the world to the Town of Weldon; and

Whereas, various articles published in national newspapers and a film made by 20th Century Fox Film Corporation have documented the Town of Weldon's annual rockfish migration; and

Whereas, around 1947, area business leaders produced a brochure proclaiming Weldon as the Rockfish Capital of the World, a motto the Town has used for more than 60 years; and

Whereas, the rockfish migration season enhances the economy of Weldon, attracting tourists to the Town and surrounding areas; and

Whereas, the late Thomas Ghio "Sonny Boy" Joyner, who lived in the nearby Town of Garysburg also located on the Roanoke River, was an ardent supporter of Weldon's being recognized as the Rockfish Capital of the World; and

Whereas, Sonny Boy Joyner was born in Northampton County and made a living farming peanuts in Northampton County and selling fertilizer in both Northampton and Halifax Counties; and

Whereas, Sonny Boy Joyner, who was the great grandson of Colonel Andrew Joyner, the first President to the North Carolina Senate, was active in State and local affairs, serving as Mayor of the Town of Garysburg, a Northampton County Commissioner, a campaign worker for many politicians, including former Governors W. Kerr Scott, Terry Sanford, Robert W. Scott, and James B. Hunt, Jr., and as a member of the State Boards of Agriculture and Transportation; and

Whereas, Sonny Boy Joyner tirelessly offered his time, resources, expertise, friendship, and support in service to the advancement of all people; and

Whereas, it is fitting to recognize rockfish as an important natural and economic resource in the Town of Weldon and to recognize those who have supported Weldon becoming the Rockfish Capital of the World; Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate, the House of Representatives concurring:



SECTION 1. The General Assembly joins the citizens of Weldon in recognizing the Town as the Rockfish Capital of the World.

SECTION 2. The General Assembly honors the memory of Thomas Ghio "Sonny Boy" Joyner, an admired and respected leader in Northampton and Halifax Counties, and expresses the appreciation of this State and its citizens for his service to his communities.

SECTION 3. The Secretary of State shall transmit a certified copy of this resolution to the Mayor of the Town of Weldon and the family of Thomas Ghio "Sonny Boy" Joyner.

SECTION 4. This resolution is effective upon ratification.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 2nd day of March, 2009.

Walter H. Dalton
President of the Senate

Joe Hackney
Speaker of the House of Representatives