

RESOLUTION FOR DOC AND MERLE WATSON

WHEREAS, Arthel (Doc) Watson was born in Stoney Fork, North Carolina in March 1923; and

WHEREAS, Doc Watson, was reared in Deep Gap in Watauga County, North Carolina where he still lives; and

WHEREAS, Doc Watson lost his sight before he reached the age of one, but spent many hours listening to recordings of the Carter Family, Jimmy Rogers, Merle Travis and Clarence Ashley on a used gramophone; and

WHEREAS, Doc Watson got his first guitar at age 13 and built a music career blending traditional mountain tunes with blues and old time country music of the 1920s, 1930s, 1940s and 1950s; and

WHEREAS, over the last 70 years, Doc Watson redefined the role of the acoustic guitar, banjo and harmonica in American folk music earning eight Grammys for his unique flat-picking style; and

WHEREAS, in 1964 Doc Watson's son Merle joined his father as accompanist, road manager and guide at music festivals and concerts across the country; and

WHEREAS, Doc and Merle Watson were in constant demand as touring artists, performing for President Jimmy Carter in 1978;

WHEREAS, Merle Watson died in a tragic accident at the age of 36; and

WHEREAS, Doc Watson started the Merle Watson Memorial Festival - now known as Merlefest - held each April on the campus of Wilkes Community College in Wilkesboro, North Carolina to honor his son; and


WHEREAS, the Boone Town Council, the Watauga County Commissioners and the Board of Directors of the Boone Area Chamber of Commerce requested the North Carolina Board of Transportation honor Doc Watson.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

That the North Carolina Board of Transportation names U.S. 421 from Deep Gap to Boone the *Doc and Merle Watson Highway* for their outstanding contributions to the culture of the region, state and nation.

That appropriate signs be erected at a suitable time.

Adopted, this the seventh day of April 2000, by the North Carolina Board of Transportation.


Secretary of Transportation