



A SENATORIAL STATEMENT

HONORING THE LIFE AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF JOHN RAY "CURLY" SECKLER AND THE YODELING RANGERS/TRAIL RIDERS

WHEREAS, John Ray "Curly" Seckler (later changed to Seckler) was born on December 25, 1919, in China Grove, North Carolina to Calvin Seckler and Carrie Seckler; and

WHEREAS, Curly Seckler developed a love for music from his parents, who played a number of instruments; and

WHEREAS, Curly Seckler began working at a local cotton mill at a very young age to help support his family and during this time acquired a used five-string banjo from local musician, Happy Trexler, and soon after began performing with his brother, Marvin, and Happy; and

WHEREAS, Curly Seckler and his brothers later formed the group, Yodeling Rangers, which consisted of Curly on tenor banjo and vocals, Marvin on guitar and lead vocals, George on fiddle, and Duard on guitar and vocals, and played at schools and social events; and

WHEREAS, in 1935, the Yodeling Rangers received greater exposure when they began performing on a daily show for WSTP radio in Salisbury, North Carolina, which broadcasted the show on several other radio stations across the State and, in 1937, the Yodeling Rangers became known as the Trail Riders and performed throughout the Carolinas, Virginia, and West Virginia; and

WHEREAS, in 1939, Curly Seckler was lured to sing tenor with a new group known as the Kentucky Pardners formed by Charlie Monroe, formerly of the Monroe Brothers, leaving the group in 1940 to resume playing with his brothers until the band split up a few years later; and

WHEREAS, Curly Seckler worked with a number of groups over the years, including the Happy Valley Boys, the Smokey Mountaineers, the Sauceman Brothers, the Stanley Brothers, and the McReynolds Brothers; and

WHEREAS, in 1949, Curly Seckler joined Lester Flatt and Earl Scruggs' Foggy Mountain Boys and performed with the band as a tenor singer and mandolin player until 1962, recording more than 130 songs with Flatt and Scruggs, including "Foggy Mountain Breakdown," "Roll in My Sweet Baby's Arms," "Salty Dog Blues," "I'll Go Stepping Too," and "Dim Lights, Thick Smoke;" and

WHEREAS, Curly Seckler left the music business for a short period during the 1960s, but found the time to perform at several bluegrass festivals; and

WHEREAS, in 1971, Curly Seckler got a record deal with County Records and released his first solo album, Curly Seckler Sings Again; and

WHEREAS, in 1973, Curly Seckler rejoined Lester Flatt as a singer for Flatt's band, Nashville Grass and upon Lester Flatt's death in 1979, Curly Seckler took over the Nashville Grass and soon after released "No Doubt About It", the first album released under Curly Seckler & the Nashville Grass; and

WHEREAS, Curly Seckler officially retired from full-time touring in 1994, but continued to perform at various events each year, including some performances in North Carolina; and

WHEREAS, in 1995, Curly Seckler recorded "60 Years of Bluegrass With My Friends," which featured several guest musicians, including Ralph Stanley, Josh Graves, Jim and Jesse McReynolds, Mac Wiseman, Benny Martin, Marty Stuart, Willis Spears, Jimmy Martin, and Doyle Lawson; and

WHEREAS, in 2004, Curly Seckler was inducted into the International Bluegrass Music Hall of Fame and during that same year recorded two new CDs containing many songs that he had written, but never performed; and

WHEREAS, in 2005, County Records reissued Curly Seckler's first solo album from 1971, with additional bonus tracks from 1989, and retitled it "That Old Book of Mine" and during that same year, Curly Seckler released a CD on Copper Creek Records entitled "Down in Caroline," which included Seckler's composition, "China Grove, My Hometown," and was a finalist for IBMA Recorded Event of the Year; and

WHEREAS, in 2006, Curly Seckler released a CD entitled, "Bluegrass, Don't You Know", which was named by the Chicago Tribune as one of the Top 10 bluegrass CDs of the year; and

WHEREAS, in 2008, Curly Seckler was featured on the Public Broadcasting Show's television show, Song of the Mountains, accompanied by the North Carolina band, The Steep Canyon Rangers and in 2009, was featured on UNC-TV's North Carolina People with William Friday; and

WHEREAS, in 2010, Curly Seckler was inducted into the North Carolina Music Hall of Fame and celebrated his 75th anniversary in the music business; and

NOW THEREFORE, the North Carolina Senate honors native son, Curly Seckler, for his accomplishments and his lasting legacy on traditional bluegrass music and expresses its appreciation to the Yodeling Rangers and Trail Raiders for their contributions to music.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned certifies that the foregoing statement was read in the Senate and placed upon the Journal on the ___ day of _____, 2011.