



## 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 75<sup>th</sup> 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.