



## TOWN OF KILL DEVIL HILLS

*Land Where Flight Began*

### **A RESOLUTION RECOMMENDING THE REPLACEMENT FOR THE HERBERT C. BONNER BRIDGE BE NAMED IN HONOR OF MARC BASNIGHT**

WHEREAS, Marc Basnight is Dare County born and North Carolina bred; and,

WHEREAS, like so many other native sons, Marc was a child of the beautiful Roanoke Island marshes and sounds, and the pristine beaches of Dare County's Outer Banks, who grew up with steadfast respect and admiration for the variety of life found in these areas; and,

WHEREAS, he understood that many, many families throughout Coastal North Carolina depended heavily on the brackish sounds, salty seashores, and life-giving marshes for sustenance and income; and

WHEREAS, Marc's grass-roots life lessons helped him, in years to come, understand the ecological and biological relationships that unite the Coastal Plain, the Piedmont, and the Mountains of North Carolina; and

WHEREAS, Marc began fulfilling his life's destiny in 1974 when he was able to fight the "isolation" of the Outer Banks as the first chairman of the Dare County Tourist Bureau; continued in 1977 with his appointment to the state-wide North Carolina Board of Transportation; and, in 1984, settled into a 26-year career in the North Carolina Senate representing the citizens of the 1<sup>st</sup> District; and

WHEREAS, immediately, Senator Marc Basnight established his commitment to be approachable and responsive to his constituents, and to be accountable to all of coastal and eastern North Carolina, its farmers and fishermen, business owners and working people; and,

WHEREAS, his constant and life-long quest for learning, his friendly nature, his desire to talk with people, and his continuous challenges for improvements in all levels of government to leaders across the state, shaped his appreciation of citizens, groups, and businesses from all areas of North Carolina, heightened his knowledge, and strengthened his grasp on the concepts and ideas he would use to fine-tune the functions of state government to provide help and assistance to those in need; and

WHEREAS, Senator Basnight was soon recognized as a natural leader who adeptly forged relationships with elected and appointed officials, and was elected by his peers Senate President *Pro Tempore* in 1993, a position he held for 17 years - the longest of any person in the history of North Carolina; and,

WHEREAS, former Democratic State Senator Tony Rand may have best described Marc's natural ease in his elected position: "He understood the way power works and the way personalities work. Marc is a natural leader. You don't ascend to a role like that unless people are willing to go down the road with you;" and,

WHEREAS, during his Senate career Senator Basnight:

- Advocated more progressive education in North Carolina, which included incentives and accountability in public schools, including in individual schools rewards system for academic achievement;
- Sponsored legislation to raise teaching standards and teacher salaries and was dedicated in his fight to make public bond money available for schools to keep pace with community and technological growth;
- Succeeded in achieving 70% voter approval of a \$3.1 billion bond initiative for community colleges and higher education;
- Successfully pursued legislation and funding for conservation efforts including, but not limited to, waterway clean-up initiatives through creation of the N.C. Clean Water Management Trust Fund, environmentally sensitive land purchases, stormwater management and control, beach preservation, and, tightening regulations on hog farms and sewage treatment plants;
- Sought and won public infrastructure improvements projects in Eastern North Carolina, including roads, highways and bridges, and special projects, which in Dare County alone included the David Stick Library at the Outer Banks History Center, the Roanoke Island Festival Park, Jennette's Pier, and the Virginia Dare Bridge; and

WHEREAS, Senator Basnight was the recipient of many awards and accolades, not the least of which was the Lifetime Achievement Award from the N.C. Coastal Federation; and

WHEREAS, when he retired in 2011 after serving a total of 13 terms, Senator Basnight had earned respect and admiration from his colleagues and citizens across North Carolina as "the most powerful politician in the State;" and,

WHEREAS, during his tenure in the Senate, the Coastal Plains and the entire State of North Carolina thrived due to Senator Basnight's shrewd decisions, political alliances, and determination to "make a difference" in his career and with his life; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Board of Commissioners of the Town of Kill Devil Hills, North Carolina, that we urge citizens and local governments throughout Dare County to support naming the new bridge across Oregon Inlet, the *N.C. Senate President Pro Tempore Marc Basnight Bridge*, in recognition and appreciation of his service to the people of the Coastal Plain, and the people of the State of North Carolina, for the achievements outlined in this resolution, and the many other accomplishments and contributions of his life; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that it be forever documented that Marc Basnight has been a living bridge, working for and uniting North Carolina's diverse population: our farmers, our fisherman, our communities, and our industries, to the best of his ability, during 37 years of public service. He surely "made a difference."

This 1<sup>st</sup> day of February 2019.



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Sheila F. Davies, Ph.D.  
Mayor  
Town of Kill Devil Hills

ATTEST:

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Mary E. Quidley  
Town Clerk