

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2007

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SENATE BILL 1959

Short Title: Water Resource Management Funds. (Public)

Sponsors: Senators McKissick; Albertson, Berger of Franklin, Brunstetter, Clodfelter, Cowell, Dalton, Dorsett, Foriest, Forrester, Garrou, Goss, Hartsell, Hoyle, Jenkins, Jones, Kerr, Malone, Nesbitt, Preston, Purcell, Shaw, Smith, Snow, Soles, Stevens, Swindell, and Weinstein.

Referred to: Appropriations/Base Budget.

May 27, 2008

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1
2 AN ACT TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS TO THE DEPARTMENT OF
3 ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES FOR REGIONAL COUNCILS
4 OF GOVERNMENT TO DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A WATER RESOURCE
5 MANAGEMENT PROGRAM.

6 Whereas, North Carolina's regional councils of government provide local
7 governments in every part of the State with regional means to address water quality
8 issues that stretch beyond any local government's boundaries; and

9 Whereas, safe and reliable water is critical to every community's economic
10 development potential, as well as existing citizens and businesses; and

11 Whereas, all water supply and water quality issues cross local boundaries,
12 calling for regional coordination to assure that water remains safe and available; and

13 Whereas, regional councils of government are in a unique position to help
14 local governments deal collectively with water resource issues, identifying solutions
15 that are tailored to conditions and water needs in each region, especially those
16 struggling to meet infrastructure and environmental challenges; and

17 Whereas, regional councils of government by working in concert with the
18 Department of Environment and Natural Resources, can bring local governments
19 together to address critical water supply and water quality at a regional scale; Now,
20 therefore,

21 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

22 **SECTION 1.** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the
23 Department of Environment and Natural Resources the sum of one million four hundred
24 thousand dollars (\$1,400,000) for the 2008-2009 fiscal year. Of the funds appropriated
25 by this section, the sum of eighty thousand dollars (\$80,000) shall be allocated each
26 fiscal year to each of the State's 17 regional councils of government to be used by each

1 regional council of government to develop and implement a nonregulatory water
2 resource management program through the voluntary cooperation of local governments,
3 water users, other stakeholders, and the Department of Environment and Natural
4 Resources. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources may use up to forty
5 thousand dollars (\$40,000) each fiscal year for costs of administering this act.

6 **SECTION 2.** In developing and implementing the water resource
7 management program required under Section 1 of this act, each regional council of
8 government shall carry out a plan of work that may include the following:

- 9 (1) Development of one or more multijurisdictional water resource
10 management plans in cooperation with local governments and key
11 water user stakeholders, and the Department of Environment and
12 Natural Resources, based on the water resource needs and geographic
13 and hydrologic features in the region, including both surface and
14 groundwater resources as appropriate to the region.
- 15 (2) Convening coalitions of local governments and major water users in
16 the respective regions to set strategies for sustaining water resources
17 necessary to support sound economic development.
- 18 (3) Implementation of multijurisdictional projects and activities that
19 address water quantity and water quality problems identified in water
20 resource management plans.
- 21 (4) Identification of opportunities for improvements to make water
22 systems more drought resistant, including assisting local governments
23 with upgrading water supply plans to address potential water shortages
24 and pursuing connections between water systems and wastewater
25 system providers to achieve efficiencies and make systems more
26 drought resistant.

27 **SECTION 3.(a)** The funds allocated to a regional council of government by
28 Section 1 of this act shall be paid in two equal installments. The first payment to a
29 regional council of government shall be made only after compliance with subdivision
30 (b)(1) of Section 3 of this act, and the second payment shall be made only after
31 compliance with subdivision (b)(2) of Section 3 of this act.

32 **SECTION 3.(b)** Each regional council of government receiving funds under
33 this act shall comply with the following requirements:

- 34 (1) By September 21, 2008, the council shall present to the Department of
35 Environment and Natural Resources and the Fiscal Research Division
36 the council's annual plan of work, goals, objectives, and proposed
37 expenditures.
- 38 (2) By March 1, 2009, the council shall submit to the Department of
39 Environment and Natural Resources and the Fiscal Research Division
40 a report of the council's accomplishments and of the actual
41 expenditures of funds appropriated by this act during the previous
42 reporting period.

43 **SECTION 4.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2008.