

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2015

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HOUSE BILL 374*
Committee Substitute Favorable 4/15/15

Short Title: IDS Efficiency Act.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

March 30, 2015

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1 AN ACT TO INCREASE THE EFFICIENCY OF THE OFFICE OF INDIGENT DEFENSE
2 SERVICES BY APPROPRIATING FUNDS TO ESTABLISH A SYSTEM OF
3 AUTOMATED KIOSKS IN CERTAIN LOCAL CONFINEMENT FACILITIES TO
4 ALLOW ATTORNEYS REPRESENTING INDIGENT DEFENDANTS TO CONSULT
5 WITH THEIR CLIENTS REMOTELY.
6

7 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

8 **SECTION 1.** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Office of
9 Indigent Defense Services the sum of one million six hundred thousand dollars (\$1,600,000)
10 for the 2015-2016 fiscal year to establish a system of fully automated kiosks in certain local
11 confinement facilities to allow attorneys representing indigent defendants to consult with their
12 clients remotely, thereby saving the time and expense of traveling to and from those facilities.
13 The system shall incorporate technology through which meetings between attorneys, their
14 clients, and authorized third parties at a separate location cannot be monitored or recorded,
15 thereby preserving confidentiality. No later than July 31, 2015, the Office of Indigent Defense
16 Services shall issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) from vendors who can provide the kiosks
17 described in this section. The vendor will be chosen for an initial two-year period, will continue
18 to own the kiosks, and will oversee access to the kiosks by attorneys assigned to represent
19 indigent clients. In the initial two-year period, attorneys assigned to represent indigent clients
20 shall bear no direct cost for use of the kiosks to meet with their indigent clients.

21 **SECTION 2.** The savings realized through the use of this system shall be used at
22 the discretion of the Commission on Indigent Defense Services to (i) continue funding for the
23 use of the kiosk system or (ii) reduce the carry-forward debt incurred through payments to
24 private assigned counsel during the 2013-2015 fiscal biennium and, to the extent there are
25 additional savings, increase the rates paid by the Office of Indigent Defense Services to private
26 assigned counsel during the 2015-2017 fiscal biennium and provide comparable increases for
27 contract attorneys during the 2015-2017 fiscal biennium.

28 **SECTION 3.** The Office of Indigent Defense Services shall report on the
29 establishment and use of the kiosk system provided for in this act and the corresponding
30 cost-savings to the Chairs of the Senate Appropriations Committee on Justice and Public
31 Safety, the Chairs of the House Appropriations Committee on Justice and Public Safety, and
32 the Chairs of the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Justice and Public Safety by
33 February 1 of each year.

34 **SECTION 4.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2015.

