

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2009**

**S**

**D**

**SENATE DRS15068-SVxz-5A\* (01/23)**

Short Title: Modernize Sales Tax Stat/Digital Products. (Public)

Sponsors: Senators Clodfelter, Hartsell and Hoyle.

Referred to:

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
2 AN ACT TO MODERNIZE THE SALES AND USE TAX STATUTES BY TREATING  
3 MUSIC, MOVIES, BOOKS, AND COMPUTER SOFTWARE THAT ARE DELIVERED  
4 ELECTRONICALLY THE SAME AS THOSE THAT ARE PURCHASED IN A  
5 TANGIBLE MEDIUM AND BY REVISING THE "MAIL ORDER" SALES TAX  
6 PROVISIONS TO INCLUDE SPECIFIC REFERENCES TO INTERNET SALES.

7 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

8 SECTION 1. G.S. 105-164.3 reads as rewritten:

9 "§ 105-164.3. Definitions.

10 The following definitions apply in this Article:

11 ...

12 (1b) Audio work. – A series of musical, spoken, or other sounds, including a  
13 ringtone.

14 (1c) Audiovisual work. – A series of related images and any sounds  
15 accompanying the images that impart an impression of motion when shown  
16 in succession.

17 ~~(1b)~~(1d) Bundled transaction. – A retail sale of two or more distinct and identifiable  
18 products, at least one of which is taxable and one of which is exempt, for  
19 one nonitemized price. Products are not sold for one nonitemized price if an  
20 invoice or another sales document made available to the purchaser separately  
21 identifies the price of each product. A bundled transaction does not include  
22 the retail sale of any of the following:

- 23 a. A product and any packaging item that accompanies the product and  
24 is exempt under G.S. 105-164.13(23).  
25 b. A sale of two or more products whose combined price varies, or is  
26 negotiable, depending on the products the purchaser selects.  
27 c. A sale of a product accompanied by a transfer of another product  
28 with no additional consideration.  
29 d. A product and the delivery or installation of the product.  
30 e. A product and any service necessary to complete the sale.

31 ~~(1d)~~(1e) Business. – Includes any activity engaged in by any person or caused to be  
32 engaged in by him with the object of gain, profit, benefit or advantage, either  
33 direct or indirect. The term "business" shall not be construed in this Article  
34 to include occasional and isolated sales or transactions by a person who does  
35 not hold himself out as engaged in business.



1 ...

2 (7a) Digital code. – A code that gives a purchaser of the code a right to receive an  
3 item by electronic delivery or electronic access. A digital code may be  
4 obtained by an electronic means or by tangible means. A digital code does  
5 not include a gift certificate or a gift card.

6 ~~(7a)~~(7h) Direct mail. – Printed material delivered or distributed by the United States  
7 Postal Service or other delivery service to a mass audience or to addresses  
8 on a mailing list provided by the purchaser or at the direction of the  
9 purchaser when the cost of the items is not billed directly to the recipients.  
10 The term includes tangible personal property supplied directly or indirectly  
11 by the purchaser to the direct mail seller for inclusion in the package  
12 containing the printed material. The term does not include multiple items of  
13 printed material delivered to a single address.

14 ...

15 ~~(17a) Load and leave.~~ – ~~Delivery to the purchaser by use of a tangible storage~~  
16 ~~media where the tangible storage media is not physically transferred to the~~  
17 ~~purchaser.~~

18 ...

19 (35f) Ringtone. – A digitized sound file that is downloaded onto a device and that  
20 may be used to alert the user of the device with respect to a communication.

21 ...."

22 **SECTION 2.** G.S. 105-164.4(a) reads as rewritten:

23 "(a) A privilege tax is imposed on a retailer at the following percentage rates of the  
24 retailer's net taxable sales or gross receipts, as appropriate. The general rate of tax is four and  
25 one-half percent (4.5%).

26 ...

27 (6b) The general rate applies to the sales price of an item that is listed in this  
28 subdivision, is delivered or accessed electronically, and would be taxable  
29 under this Article if sold in a tangible medium. The retail sale of a digital  
30 code that is used to obtain any of the items taxed by this subdivision is  
31 considered a sale of that item. The tax applies regardless of whether the  
32 purchaser of the item has a right to redistribute it, to use it permanently, or to  
33 use it without making continued payments. The tax does not apply to an item  
34 that is taxed under another subdivision of this subsection or under  
35 G.S. 105-164.4C. A person who sells an item that is taxable under this  
36 subdivision is considered a retailer under this Article. The following items  
37 are subject to tax under this subdivision:

- 38 a. An audio work.  
39 b. An audiovisual work.  
40 c. A book.  
41 d. Computer software.

42 ...."

43 **SECTION 3.(a)** G.S. 105-164.3(18) is recodified as G.S. 105-164.3(33g) and reads  
44 as rewritten:

45 ~~"(18)~~(33g) Mail order-Remote sale. – A sale of tangible personal property, ordered  
46 by mail, by telephone, computer link, via the Internet, or other similar  
47 method, to a purchaser who is in this State at the time the order is remitted,  
48 from a retailer who receives the order in another state and transports the  
49 property or causes it to be transported to a person in this State. It is presumed  
50 that a resident of this State who remits an order was in this State at the time  
51 the order was remitted."

1           **SECTION 3.(b)** The catch line of G.S. 105-164.8 reads as rewritten:  
2   "**§ 105-164.8. Retailer's obligation to collect tax; ~~mail-order-remote~~ sales subject to tax.**"

3           **SECTION 3.(c)** G.S. 105-164.8(b) reads as rewritten:

4           "(b) ~~Mail Order Remote Sales.~~ – A retailer who makes a ~~mail-order-remote~~ sale is  
5 engaged in business in this State and is subject to the tax levied under this Article if at least one  
6 of the following conditions is met:

- 7           (1) The retailer is a corporation engaged in business under the laws of this State  
8           or a person domiciled in, a resident of, or a citizen of, this State.
- 9           (2) The retailer maintains retail establishments or offices in this State, whether  
10           the ~~mail-order-remote~~ sales thus subject to taxation by this State result from  
11           or are related in any other way to the activities of such establishments or  
12           offices.
- 13           (3) The retailer ~~has representatives in this State who solicit business or transact~~  
14           ~~business on behalf of the retailer, solicits or transacts business in this State~~  
15           by employees, independent contractors, agents, or other representatives  
16           whether the ~~mail-order-remote~~ sales thus subject to taxation by this State  
17           result from or are related in any other way to ~~such~~ the solicitation or  
18           transaction of business. A retailer is presumed to be soliciting or transacting  
19           business by an independent contractor, agent, or other representative if the  
20           retailer enters into an agreement with a resident of this State under which the  
21           resident, for a commission or other consideration, directly or indirectly refers  
22           potential customers, whether by a link on an Internet Web site or otherwise,  
23           to the retailer, if the cumulative gross receipts from sales by the retailer to  
24           purchasers in this State who are referred to the retailer by all residents with  
25           this type of agreement with the retailer is in excess of ten thousand dollars  
26           (\$10,000) during the preceding four quarterly periods. This presumption  
27           may be rebutted by proof that the resident with whom the retailer has an  
28           agreement did not engage in any solicitation in the State on behalf of the  
29           seller that would satisfy the nexus requirement of the United States  
30           Constitution during the four quarterly periods in question.
- 31           (4) Repealed by Session Laws 1991, c. 45, s. 16.
- 32           (5) The retailer, by purposefully or systematically exploiting the market  
33           provided by this State by any media-assisted, media-facilitated, or  
34           media-solicited means, including direct mail advertising, distribution of  
35           catalogs, computer-assisted shopping, television, radio or other electronic  
36           media, telephone solicitation, magazine or newspaper advertisements, or  
37           other media, creates nexus with this State.
- 38           (6) Through compact or reciprocity with another jurisdiction of the United  
39           States, that jurisdiction uses its taxing power and its jurisdiction over the  
40           retailer in support of this State's taxing power.
- 41           (7) The retailer consents, expressly or by implication, to the imposition of the  
42           tax imposed by this Article. For purposes of this subdivision, evidence that a  
43           retailer engaged in the activity described in subdivision (5) shall be prima  
44           facie evidence that the retailer consents to the imposition of the tax imposed  
45           by this Article.
- 46           (8) The retailer is a holder of a wine shipper permit issued by the ABC  
47           Commission pursuant to G.S. 18B-1001.1."

48           **SECTION 4.** G.S. 105-164.13(43a) is repealed.

49           **SECTION 5.** G.S. 105-467(a) is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

1           "(8) The sales price of an audio work, audiovisual work, a book, and computer  
2           software that is subject to the general rate of tax under  
3           G.S. 105-164.4(a)(6b)."

4           **SECTION 6.** Section 4 of Chapter 1096 of the 1967 Session Laws, as amended,  
5 reads as rewritten:

6           "Sec. 4. Scope of Sales Tax. The sales tax which may be imposed under this division after  
7 the holding of a special election is limited to a tax at the rate of one per cent (1%) of: (1) the  
8 sale price of those articles of tangible personal property now subject to the general rate of sales  
9 tax imposed by the State under ~~G.S. 105-164.4(a)(1) and (4b);~~ 105-164.4(a)(1), (4b), and (6b);  
10 (2) the gross receipts derived from the lease or rental of tangible personal property when the  
11 lease or rental of the property is subject to the general rate of sales tax imposed by the State  
12 under G.S. 105-164.4(a)(2); (3) the gross receipts derived from the rental of any room or  
13 lodging furnished by any hotel, motel, inn, tourist camp or other similar public  
14 accommodations now subject to the general rate of sales tax imposed by the State under G. S.  
15 105-164.4(a)(3); (4) the gross receipts derived from services rendered by laundries, dry  
16 cleaners, cleaning plants and similar type businesses now subject to the general rate of sales tax  
17 imposed by the State under G.S. 105-164.4(a)(4); (5) The sales price of food and other items  
18 that are not otherwise exempt from tax pursuant to G.S. 105-164.13 but are exempt from the  
19 State sales and use tax pursuant to G.S. 105-164.13B; and (6) The sales price of prepaid  
20 telephone calling service taxed as tangible personal property under G.S. 105-164.4(a)(4d). The  
21 taxes authorized by this division do not apply to sales that are taxable by the State under  
22 G.S. 105-164.4 but are not specifically listed in this section.

23           The exemptions and exclusions contained in G.S. 105-164.13 and the sales and use tax  
24 holiday contained in G.S. 105-164.13C apply with equal force and like manner to the local  
25 sales tax authorized to be imposed and levied under this division. The county shall have no  
26 authority, with respect to the local sales and use tax imposed under this division, to change,  
27 alter, add, or delete any exemptions or exclusions contained under G.S. 105-164.13.

28           The local sales tax authorized to be imposed and levied under the provisions of this division  
29 shall be applicable to such retail sales, leases, rentals, rendering of services, furnishing of  
30 lodging or accommodations and other taxable transactions which are made, furnished or  
31 rendered by retailers whose place of business is located within the taxing county. The tax  
32 imposed shall apply to the furnishing of rooms, lodging or other accommodations within the  
33 county which are rented to transients. The sourcing principles in G.S. 105-164.4B apply in  
34 determining whether the local sales tax applies to a transaction. Provided, however, no tax shall  
35 be imposed where the tangible personal property sold is delivered by the retailer or his agent to  
36 the purchaser at a point outside this State."

37           **SECTION 7.** Section 3 of this act is effective when it becomes law. The remainder  
38 of this act becomes effective January 1, 2010, and applies to sales made on or after that date.