

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA

SESSION 1991

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HOUSE BILL 548

Short Title: Legislature Coverage/Funds.

(Public)

Sponsors: Representative Miller.

Referred to: Appropriations.

April 1, 1991

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS TO ENABLE THE AGENCY FOR PUBLIC
3 TELECOMMUNICATIONS TO INCREASE COVERAGE OF THE
4 LEGISLATURE.

5 Whereas, the Study Commission on Open Government through Public
6 Telecommunications, established pursuant to Part 6 of Chapter 1078 of the 1989
7 Session Laws, Regular Session 1990, is currently studying ways to increase public
8 access to the operations of the General Assembly and State government in general and
9 make them more available for public examination and participation; and

10 Whereas, the Study Commission is presently examining many issues relating
11 to the costs of operating expanded public telecommunications service, including capital
12 equipment requirements, the proposed phasing-in of coverage of the General Assembly
13 sessions, the cost of the satellite transponder market, and available financial and other
14 resources; and

15 Whereas, the Study Commission recognizes that there are a number of
16 options for full coverage that need to be given careful and continued study, such as the
17 method of obtaining satellite use; and

18 Whereas, while much continued study is necessary, the Study Committee
19 does recommend that the existing Open Public Events Network is presently able, with
20 some capital funds appropriated to it for the 1991-92 fiscal year, to increase its coverage
21 and call-ins covering the legislature and that the General Assembly give careful
22 consideration to appropriating funds for the 1992-93 fiscal year to provide up to 45
23 hours a week of State government coverage, with programs including live and taped

1 replays of the legislature, coverage of meetings in the legislature and other branches of
2 government, and citizen call-ins to public officials; Now, therefore,

3 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

4 Section 1. The General Assembly endorses the concept of increasing
5 coverage of North Carolina government, including, specifically, coverage of Senate and
6 House of Representatives floor action and additional citizen call-ins to public officials,
7 through the Open Public Events Network of the Agency for Public Telecommunications
8 of the Department of Administration.

9 Sec. 2. The General Assembly endorses the Agency for Public
10 Telecommunication's continuing efforts to find funds to support the expansion of the
11 Open Public Events Network expansion, from non-State sources, including the
12 commercial satellite business, other states, the federal government, and private
13 foundations.

14 Sec. 3. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Agency for Public
15 Telecommunications, Department of Administration, the sum of \$150,000 for the 1991-
16 92 fiscal year, for capital improvement funds to provide cameras and equipment to
17 enable the Agency to increase coverage and call-ins covering the legislature.

18 Sec. 4. This act becomes effective July 1, 1991.