GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA

SESSION 1995

H HOUSE BILL 551

Sponsors: Representatives Easterling; Adams, Alexander, Black, Boyd-McIntyre, Church, Cunningham, Earle, Fitch, Fox, Gray, Linney, Luebke, McLaughlin, McMahan, Michaux, G. Miller, Oldham, Robinson, Tolson, Wainwright, Wilkins, Womble, Wright,

(Public)

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Referred to: Appropriations.

March 27, 1995

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

Short Title: Grassroots Science Museum Funds.

AN ACT TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS FOR A GRASSROOTS SCIENCE MUSEUM PROGRAM BY THE MUSEUM OF NATURAL SCIENCES TO IMPROVE STATE PROGRAMS IN SCIENCE AND ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION.

Whereas, the North Carolina Museums Council has recommended active support for the resolution of the issue of State funding for museums, with the objective of an equitable process by which funding of operations and projects at creditable institutions may be solicited, apportioned, and accounted for; and

Whereas, the Grassroots Arts Program of North Carolina Arts Council, established by the General Assembly in 1981, has provided consistent support to arts programs across the State; and

Whereas, the definition of "cultural purpose" in G.S. 105-278.3(d)(5) that the Arts Council uses to establish eligibility for its funds does not include sciences; and

Whereas, science museum educational programs have never been funded by the Arts Council; and

Whereas, serious concerns are being expressed at the national and State levels by scientists and educators about the nation's mathematics and science programs; and

Whereas, the State's science museums, recognized as being at the forefront in interpreting science to our citizenry and serving as an important resource for the education of students and teachers, share these concerns; and

Whereas, the State's 10 metropolitan science museums, located in Asheville, Charlotte, Durham, Gastonia, Greensboro, Hickory, Rocky Mount, Wilson, Wilmington, and Winston-Salem, which are regional museums that further public understanding of science, the environment, and technology, and enhance science education in schools and communities throughout the State of North Carolina, in cooperation with the North Carolina State Museum of Natural Sciences, have developed a program that would enable the science museums of the State to resolve some of these concerns; and

Whereas, a Grassroots Science Museum Program would provide consistent support to science museums that would allow the development of a State science outreach program that would, in time, be comparable to the State's program of support for the arts; Now, therefore,

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

Section 1. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Environment, Health, and Natural Resources the sum of one million nine hundred seventy-seven thousand ninety-five dollars (\$1,977,095) for the 1995-96 fiscal year and the sum of one million nine hundred fifty-three thousand three hundred fourteen dollars (\$1,953,314) for the 1996-97 fiscal year for the full funding of the Grassroots Science Museum Program through the North Carolina State Museum of Natural Sciences to serve local museums and science centers and enhance a State outreach program in science and environmental education. The membership in the Grassroots Science Museum Program shall be determined and funds shall be distributed by a process developed by the Department of Environment, Health, and Natural Resources with consultation with the Grassroots Science Museums which allocates fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) to each Grassroots Science Museum and an additional percentage based on the operating budget of each museum.

Sec. 2. This act becomes effective July 1, 1995.