

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2005**

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**HOUSE BILL 1980
Committee Substitute Favorable 6/12/06**

Short Title: E-NC Internet Connectivity/Jobs Funding.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

May 16, 2006

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1 AN ACT REPEALING THE E-NC AUTHORITY SUNSET PROVISION AND
2 APPROPRIATING FUNDS TO THE E-NC AUTHORITY FOR HIGH-SPEED
3 INTERNET CONNECTIVITY INCENTIVE GRANTS AND FOR JOB
4 CREATION THROUGH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT OF
5 E-NC BUSINESS AND TECHNOLOGY TELECENTERS.
6

7 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

8 **SECTION 1.** The General Assembly finds that:

- 9 (1) The e-NC Authority, created in S.L. 2003-425 to continue the work of
10 the Rural Internet Access Authority, is successfully pursuing its
11 mandated goals, increasing access to affordable high-speed Internet,
12 and creating 21st century jobs through technology-based economic
13 development in the rural areas and distressed urban areas of the State.
14 (2) The e-NC Business and Technology Telecenters (BTTs) serve as
15 catalysts to technology-based economic development in some of North
16 Carolina's most distressed regions by helping to grow existing small
17 businesses, bringing new kinds of businesses into rural communities
18 and regions, stimulating and supporting entrepreneurship, and creating
19 21st century jobs.
20 (3) e-NC works successfully with local governments and educational
21 institutions to strengthen their technology capacities and services to
22 their communities, making available to the citizens technology
23 services and resources, training, and public access to computers and
24 the Internet.

25 **SECTION 2.** Section 4 of S.L. 2003-425 reads as rewritten:

26 **"SECTION 4.** Sections 1 and 2 of this act become effective December 31, 2003,
27 with the e-NC Authority hereby designated as the successor entity of the Rural Internet
28 Access Authority that will dissolve on that date, as provided by Section 5 of S.L.
29 2000-149. The remainder of this act is effective when it becomes law. ~~The e-NC~~

1 Authority created in this act is dissolved effective December 31, 2006. This act is
2 repealed effective December 31, 2006. Part 2F of Article 10 of Chapter 143B of the
3 General Statutes and G.S. 120-123(77), as enacted by this act, are repealed effective
4 December 31, 2006."

5 **SECTION 3.(a)** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the e-NC
6 Authority the sum of seven million five hundred thousand dollars (\$7,500,000) for the
7 2006-2007 fiscal year for Internet connectivity incentive grants. These funds shall not
8 revert. It is the intent of the General Assembly that these funds shall be used to allow at
9 least seventy percent (70%) of the households in each county to have the ability to
10 access high-speed Internet services by 2008. Funds for connectivity incentives should
11 be committed to service providers by July 1, 2008. These incentive grants shall be
12 competitive and shall require at least a fifty percent (50%) cash match from the
13 participating service providers. Companies must ensure the number of additional
14 households to be served as a result of this funding. The e-NC Authority may use up to
15 five percent (5%) of these funds to cover its expenses in grant letting and monitoring.

16 **SECTION 3.(b)** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the e-NC
17 Authority the sum of one million six hundred thousand dollars (\$1,600,000) for the
18 2006-2007 fiscal year for continued and expanded funding of the e-NC Business and
19 Technology Telecenter (BTT) program. The e-NC Authority may use up to five percent
20 (5%) of these funds to cover its expenses in program development and implementation
21 of activity areas with the BTTs. The e-NC Authority may contract with other State
22 agencies, The University of North Carolina, the Community Colleges System Office,
23 and nonprofit organizations to assist with BTT program development and the evaluation
24 of program activities.

25 **SECTION 3.(c)** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the e-NC
26 Authority the sum of three hundred thousand dollars (\$300,000) for the 2006-2007
27 fiscal year for competitive innovation grants to e-communities, BTTs, and Local
28 E-government Utilization Program participants for the development of model programs
29 and value-added products that enhance the economy of their regions.

30 **SECTION 4.** The e-NC Authority shall work cooperatively with the
31 following entities to carry out the purposes of this act: the Department of Commerce,
32 The University of North Carolina, the Community Colleges System Office, the local
33 councils of government, the local chambers of commerce, the North Carolina
34 Association of County Commissioners, the North Carolina League of Municipalities,
35 the Regional Economic Development Partnerships, local economic developers, and the
36 private and nonprofit sectors. The e-NC Authority shall make annual reports concerning
37 its activities to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Information Technology
38 and the information technology committees of the House of Representatives and the
39 Senate.

40 **SECTION 5.** Section 3 of this act becomes effective July 1, 2006. The
41 remainder of this act is effective when it becomes law.