

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2011**

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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 837*

Sponsors: Senator Hartsell.

Referred to: Rules and Operations of the Senate.

May 22, 2012

1 A JOINT RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE OPINION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
2 THAT THE LOCAL PROVISION OF WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT SERVICES
3 SHOULD BE STREAMLINED BY REALIGNING LOCAL WORKFORCE
4 DEVELOPMENT AREAS WITH THE BOUNDARIES OF COUNCILS OF
5 GOVERNMENTS ESTABLISHED PURSUANT TO G.S 160A-470, AS
6 RECOMMENDED BY THE PROGRAM EVALUATION DIVISION AND ENDORSED
7 BY THE JOINT LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM EVALUATION OVERSIGHT
8 COMMITTEE.

9 Whereas, North Carolina and the federal government have been engaged in
10 workforce development activities for nearly 80 years; and

11 Whereas, workforce development programs established by the State and the federal
12 government were designed to help address the high unemployment rate and skills gap between
13 unemployed workers and available positions, while spurring business growth and
14 competitiveness in a global economy; and

15 Whereas, the program established pursuant to the federal Workforce Investment Act
16 of 1998 (WIA) is a central component of North Carolina's workforce development system; and

17 Whereas, a key feature of the WIA is the local workforce development areas, which
18 oversee the JobLink Career Centers that are a service delivery mechanism designed to be
19 one-stop shops for workforce development services; and

20 Whereas, the Joint Legislative Program Evaluation Oversight Committee (JLPEOC)
21 directed the Program Evaluation Division (PED) to complete a full review of the workforce
22 development system and present recommendations regarding its appropriate organization and
23 administration to foster the most efficient and effective system for North Carolina; and

24 Whereas, the PED, in its March 28, 2012, report to the JLPEOC titled "State and
25 Local Improvement Needed for Workforce Development System Integration and
26 Accountability," found that North Carolina's local workforce development areas are based on
27 criteria that were established through federal employment and training programs from almost
28 40 years ago, and the areas are not strategically aligned with economic development activities
29 in the State and this structure compromises effectiveness; and

30 Whereas, the report found that, although maintaining a local focus is required to
31 meet State and federal rules, reducing the number of local workforce development areas has the
32 advantage of increasing resources available to job seekers because population partly determines
33 area funding. The larger the area, the more funding it receives, and increased funding allows
34 local workforce development areas to have more programs or use their money more effectively
35 by having more types of programs; and

36 Whereas, the report recommends aligning local workforce development areas with
37 the boundaries of councils of governments (COG) established pursuant to G.S. 160A-470.



1 Currently, COGs are the administrative entity for 13 of the 23 local workforce development
2 areas, and all COGs already have an administrative structure in place to manage aging,
3 transportation planning, Housing and Urban Development grants, and several other state and
4 federal programs; and

5 Whereas, the report found that realigning local workforce development areas using
6 COG regions would reduce the number of local workforce development areas from 23 to 16
7 and would change the current structure by disbanding nine areas, including the six
8 single-county areas. Under this structure, the number of counties for local workforce
9 development areas would increase in range from three to 12 counties, and the area population
10 would range from 172,000 to 2,000,000; Now, therefore,

11 Be it resolved by the Senate, the House of Representatives concurring:

12 **SECTION 1.** The General Assembly finds that the large number of and variability
13 among local workforce development areas compromise the effectiveness and efficiency of the
14 workforce development system.

15 **SECTION 2.** It is the opinion of the General Assembly that the local provision of
16 WIA services should be streamlined by realigning the local workforce areas with the
17 boundaries of the COGs established pursuant to G.S. 160A-470.

18 **SECTION 3.** This resolution is effective upon ratification.