

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2021

H.B. 705
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HOUSE BILL DRH10324-LRa-129

Short Title: Set \$15 Minimum Wage for First Responders. (Public)

Sponsors: Representative Everitt.

Referred to:

1 AN ACT SETTING THE MINIMUM WAGE OF ALL FIRST RESPONDERS IN THIS STATE
2 AT FIFTEEN DOLLARS PER HOUR AND ESTABLISHING THE FIRST RESPONDERS
3 FUND TO OFFSET TEMPORARILY INCREASED PAYROLL COSTS INCURRED BY
4 EMPLOYERS OF FIRST RESPONDERS.

5 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

6 **SECTION 1.** Effective January 1, 2022, G.S. 95-25.3 is amended by adding a new
7 subsection to read:

8 "(a1) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (a) of this section to the contrary, every
9 employer of employees who are first responders shall pay to each first responder who in any
10 workweek performs any work wages of at least fifteen dollars (\$15.00) per hour or the minimum
11 wage set forth in paragraph 1 of section 6(a) of the Fair Labor Standards Act, 29 U.S.C. §
12 206(a)(1), as that wage may change from time to time, whichever is higher. The term "first
13 responder," as used in this subsection, means a law enforcement officer, a firefighter, or an
14 emergency medical technician or paramedic. The term does not include a volunteer firefighter."

15 **SECTION 2.** Effective July 1, 2021, federal funds received by the State under the
16 Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021, P.L. 116-260, in the amount of fifty-two million dollars
17 (\$52,000,000) for the 2021-2022 fiscal year are appropriated to the Department of Commerce
18 (Department) for the 2021-2022 fiscal year to create the First Responders Fund (Fund). The Fund
19 shall be administered to provide grants to offset fifty percent (50%) of the costs incurred by
20 employers, for one year only, on account of the increase in first responder wages required by
21 G.S. 95-25.3(a1), as enacted by this act. These funds shall be used and allocated as follows:

- 22 (1) Public and private employers of first responders may apply for grants in
23 accordance with requirements determined by the Department. At a minimum,
24 each applicant must provide information showing the number of first
25 responders who received increases, the amount of each increase, and the total
26 increased personnel cost to the employer due to first responder minimum wage
27 increases.
- 28 (2) \$100,000 in administrative costs are allocated to the Department for the
29 administration of the grant program.
- 30 (3) Grant funding shall remain available during the period from January 1, 2022,
31 until December 31, 2022. Any unexpended grant funds shall revert to the
32 General Fund on June 30, 2023.

33 **SECTION 3.** This act is effective when it becomes law.



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