

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2015

SESSION LAW 2015-2
SENATE BILL 20

AN ACT TO UPDATE THE REFERENCE TO THE INTERNAL REVENUE CODE, TO DECOUPLE FROM CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF THE FEDERAL TAX INCREASE PREVENTION ACT OF 2014, TO MODIFY THE MOTOR FUELS TAX RATE, AND TO MAKE CERTAIN REDUCTIONS WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FOR THE 2014-2015 FISCAL YEAR.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

PART I. IRC UPDATE

SECTION 1.1 G.S. 105-228.90(b)(1b) reads as rewritten:

"(1b) Code. – The Internal Revenue Code as enacted as of ~~December 31, 2013~~, January 1, 2015, including any provisions enacted as of that date that become effective either before or after that date."

SECTION 1.2.(a) G.S. 105-130.5B(c) reads as rewritten:

"§ 105-130.5B. **Adjustments when State decouples from federal accelerated depreciation and expensing.**

...
(c) Section 179 Expense. – For purposes of this subdivision, the definition of section 179 property has the same meaning as under section 179 of the Code as of ~~January 2, 2013~~. January 1, 2015. A taxpayer who places section 179 property in service during a taxable year listed in the table below must add to the taxpayer's federal taxable income eighty-five percent (85%) of the amount by which the taxpayer's expense deduction under section 179 of the Code exceeds the dollar and investment limitation listed in the table below for the taxable year.

A taxpayer is allowed to deduct twenty percent (20%) of the add-back in each of the first five taxable years following the year the taxpayer is required to include the add-back in income.

Taxable Year of 85% Add-Back	Dollar Limitation	Investment Limitation
2010	\$250,000	\$800,000
2011	\$250,000	\$800,000
2012	\$250,000	\$800,000
2013	\$25,000	\$200,000
<u>2014</u>	<u>\$25,000</u>	<u>\$200,000</u>

SECTION 1.2.(b) G.S. 105-153.6(c) reads as rewritten:

"§ 105-153.6. **Adjustments when State decouples from federal accelerated depreciation and expensing.**

...
(c) Section 179 Expense. – For purposes of this subdivision, the definition of section 179 property has the same meaning as under section 179 of the Code as of ~~January 2, 2013~~. January 1, 2015. A taxpayer who places section 179 property in service during a taxable year listed in the table below must add to the taxpayer's federal taxable income or adjusted gross income, as appropriate, eighty-five percent (85%) of the amount by which the taxpayer's expense deduction under section 179 of the Code exceeds the dollar and investment limitation listed in the table below for that taxable year. For taxable years before 2012, the taxpayer must add the amount to the taxpayer's federal taxable income. For taxable year 2012 and after, the taxpayer must add the amount to the taxpayer's adjusted gross income.

A taxpayer is allowed to deduct twenty percent (20%) of the add-back in each of the first five taxable years following the year the taxpayer is required to include the add-back in income.



Taxable Year of 85% Add-Back	Dollar Limitation	Investment Limitation
2010	\$250,000	\$800,000
2011	\$250,000	\$800,000
2012	\$250,000	\$800,000
2013	\$25,000	\$200,000
2014	\$25,000	\$200,000"

SECTION 1.3. G.S. 105-153.5 reads as rewritten:

"§ 105-153.5. Modifications to adjusted gross income.

(a) Deduction Amount. – In calculating North Carolina taxable income, a taxpayer may deduct from adjusted gross income either the standard deduction amount provided in subdivision (1) of this subsection or the itemized deduction amount provided in subdivision (2) of this subsection that the taxpayer claimed under the Code. The deduction amounts are as follows:

- (1) Standard deduction amount. – The standard deduction amount is zero for a person who is not eligible for a standard deduction under section 63 of the Code. For all other taxpayers, the standard deduction amount is equal to the amount listed in the table below based on the taxpayer's filing status:

Filing Status	Standard Deduction
Married, filing jointly	\$15,000
Head of Household	12,000
Single	7,500
Married, filing separately	7,500.

- (2) Itemized deduction amount. – An amount equal to the sum of the items listed in this subdivision. The amounts allowed under this subdivision are not subject to the overall limitation on itemized deductions under section 68 of the Code:

a. The amount allowed as a deduction for charitable contributions under section 170 of the Code for that taxable year. For taxable year 2014, a taxpayer who elected to take the income exclusion under section 408(d)(8) of the Code for a qualified charitable distribution from an individual retirement plan by a person who has attained the age of 70 1/2 may deduct the amount that would have been allowed as a charitable deduction under section 170 of the Code had the taxpayer not elected to take the income exclusion.

b. The amount allowed as a deduction for interest paid or accrued during the taxable year under section 163(h) of the Code with respect to any qualified residence plus the amount claimed by the taxpayer as a deduction for property taxes paid or accrued on real estate under section 164 of the Code for that taxable year. For taxable year 2014, the amount allowed as a deduction for interest paid or accrued during the taxable year under section 163(h) of the Code with respect to any qualified residence shall not include the amount for mortgage insurance premiums treated as qualified residence interest. The amount allowed under this sub-subdivision may not exceed twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000). For spouses filing as married filing separately or married filing jointly, the total mortgage interest and real estate taxes claimed by both spouses combined may not exceed twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000). For spouses filing as married filing separately with a joint obligation for mortgage interest and real estate taxes, the deduction for these items is allowable to the spouse who actually paid them. If the amount of the mortgage interest and real estate taxes paid by both spouses exceeds twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000), these deductions must be prorated based on the percentage paid by each spouse. For joint obligations paid from joint accounts, the proration is based on the income reported by each spouse for that taxable year.

...

(d) Decoupling Adjustments. – In calculating North Carolina taxable income, a taxpayer must add to the taxpayer's adjusted gross income any of the following items that are not included in the taxpayer's adjusted gross income:

- (1) For taxable year 2014, the amount excluded from the taxpayer's gross income for the discharge of qualified principal residence indebtedness under section 108 of the Code. The purpose of this subdivision is to decouple from the extension of the income exclusion under section 102 of the Tax Increase Prevention Act of 2014.
- (2) For taxable year 2014, the amount of the taxpayer's deduction for qualified tuition and related expenses under section 222 of the Code. The purpose of this subdivision is to decouple from the extension of the federal above-the-line deduction under section 107 of the Tax Increase Prevention Act of 2014.
- (3) For taxable year 2014, the amount excluded from the taxpayer's gross income for a qualified charitable distribution from an individual retirement plan by a person who has attained age 70 1/2 under section 408(d)(8) of the Code. The purpose of this subdivision is to decouple from the extension of the income exclusion under section 108 of the Tax Increase Prevention Act of 2014.

~~(d)~~(e) S Corporations. – Each shareholder's pro rata share of an S Corporation's income is subject to the adjustments provided in this section and in G.S. 105-153.6."

SECTION 1.4. This Part is effective when the act becomes law. Notwithstanding Section 1.1 of this act, any amendments to the Internal Revenue Code enacted after December 31, 2013, that increase North Carolina taxable income for the 2014 taxable year are effective for taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2015.

PART II. MOTOR FUEL TAX CHANGES

SECTION 2.1. Effective April 1, 2015, and notwithstanding G.S. 105-449.80, the motor fuel excise tax rate is thirty-six cents (36¢) a gallon.

SECTION 2.2.(a) G.S. 105-449.80 reads as rewritten:
"§ 105-449.80. **Tax rate.**

(a) Rate. – ~~The motor fuel excise tax rate is a flat rate of seventeen and one-half cents (17 1/2¢) a gallon plus a variable wholesale component. The variable wholesale component is either three and one-half cents (3 1/2¢) a gallon or seven percent (7%) of the average wholesale price of motor fuel for the applicable base period, whichever is greater.~~

~~The two base periods are six-month periods; one ends on September 30 and one ends on March 31. The Secretary must set the tax rate twice a year based on the wholesale price for each base period. A tax rate set by the Secretary using information for the base period that ends on September 30 applies to the six-month period that begins the following January 1. A tax rate set by the Secretary using information for the base period that ends on March 31 applies to the six-month period that begins the following July 1. For the period that begins on January 1, 2016, and ends on June 30, 2016, the motor fuel excise tax rate is a flat rate of thirty-five cents (35¢) per gallon. For the period that begins on July 1, 2016, and ends on December 31, 2016, the motor fuel excise tax rate is a flat rate of thirty-four cents (34¢) per gallon. For the calendar years beginning on January 1, 2017, the motor fuel excise tax rate is a flat rate of thirty-four cents (34¢) per gallon, multiplied by a percentage. For calendar years beginning on or after January 1, 2018, the motor fuel excise tax rate is the amount for the preceding calendar year, multiplied by a percentage. The percentage is one hundred percent (100%) plus or minus the sum of the following:~~

- (1) The percentage change in population for the applicable calendar year, as estimated under G.S. 143C-2-2, multiplied by seventy-five percent (75%).
- (2) The annual percentage change in the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers, multiplied by twenty-five percent (25%). For purposes of this subdivision, "Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers" means the United States city average for energy index contained in the detailed report released in the October prior to the applicable calendar year by the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the United States Department of Labor.

~~(b) Wholesale Price.— The Secretary must determine the average wholesale price of motor fuel for each base period. To do this, the Secretary must use information on refiner and~~

gas plant operator sales prices of finished motor gasoline and No. 2 diesel fuel for resale, published by the United States Department of Energy in the "Monthly Energy Review", or equivalent data.

The Secretary must compute the average sales price of finished motor gasoline for the base period, compute the average sales price for No. 2 diesel fuel for the base period, and then compute a weighted average of the results of the first two computations based on the proportion of tax collected on each under this Article for the base period. The Secretary must then convert the weighted average price to a cents-per-gallon rate and round the rate to the nearest one-tenth of a cent (1/10¢). If the converted cents-per-gallon rate is exactly between two-tenths of a cent (2/10¢) the Secretary must round the rate up to the higher of the two.

(c) Notification. – The Secretary must notify affected taxpayers of the tax rate to be in effect for each ~~six-month period~~ calendar year beginning January 1 and July 1."

SECTION 2.2.(b) G.S. 105-449.107(c) reads as rewritten:

"(c) Sales Tax Amount. – Article 5 of Subchapter I of this Chapter determines the amount of State sales and use tax to be deducted under this section from a motor fuel excise tax refund. Articles 39, 40, and 42 of Subchapter VIII of this Chapter and the Mecklenburg First 1% Sales Tax Act determine the amount of local sales and use tax to be deducted under this section from a motor fuel excise tax refund. ~~The sales price and the cost price of motor fuel to be used in determining the amount to deduct is the average of the wholesale prices used under G.S. 105-449.80 to determine the excise tax rates in effect for the two six-month periods of the year for which the refund is claimed.~~"

SECTION 2.2.(c) G.S. 150B-2(8a) reads as rewritten:

"(8a) "Rule" means any agency regulation, standard, or statement of general applicability that implements or interprets an enactment of the General Assembly or Congress or a regulation adopted by a federal agency or that describes the procedure or practice requirements of an agency. The term includes the establishment of a fee and the amendment or repeal of a prior rule. The term does not include the following:

- ...
- j. Establishment of the interest rate that applies to tax assessments under ~~G.S. 105-241.21 and the variable component of the excise tax on motor fuel under G.S. 105-449.80.~~ G.S. 105-241.21.
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SECTION 2.3. G.S. 105-449.107(c) reads as rewritten:

"(c) Sales Tax Amount. – Article 5 of Subchapter I of this Chapter determines the amount of State sales and use tax to be deducted under this section from a motor fuel excise tax refund. Articles 39, 40, and 42 of Subchapter VIII of this Chapter and the Mecklenburg First 1% Sales Tax Act determine the amount of local sales and use tax to be deducted under this section from a motor fuel excise tax refund. The sales price and the cost price of motor fuel to be used in determining the amount to deduct is the average of the wholesale prices used under G.S. 105-449.80 to determine the excise tax rates rate in effect for the ~~two six-month periods of the calendar year~~ for which the refund is claimed."

SECTION 2.4.(a) Section 4.1 of S.L. 2014-100 reads as rewritten:

"**SECTION 4.1.** Appropriations from the State Highway Trust Fund for the maintenance and operation of the Department of Transportation and for other purposes as enumerated are adjusted for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2015, according to the following schedule. Amounts set out in parentheses are reductions from Highway Trust Fund Appropriations for the 2014-2015 fiscal year.

Current Operations – Highway Trust Fund

2014-2015

Program Administration	(\$11,000,000)
Aid to Municipalities	0
Intrastate	0
Secondary Roads	0
Urban Loops	0
Mobility Fund	0
Turnpike Authority	0
Transfer to General Fund	0

Transfer to Highway Fund	0
Debt Service	0
Strategic Prioritization Funding Plan for Transportation Investments	67,993,140 64,643,140

Total Highway Trust Fund Appropriations **\$ 1,162,393,140**~~1,159,043,140~~"

SECTION 2.4.(b) Section 4.2 of S.L. 2014-100 reads as rewritten:

"**SECTION 4.2.** Section 4.2 of S.L. 2013-360 is repealed. The Highway Trust Fund availability used in developing the 2014-2015 fiscal year budget is shown below:

Highway Trust Fund Availability Statement **2014-2015**

Unreserved Fund Balance	\$ 0
Estimated Revenue	1,162,370,000
Adjustment to Revenue Availability:	1,159,020,000
Motor Fuel Tax Refund Repeal (Taxi Cabs)	23,140

Total Highway Trust Fund Availability **\$ 1,162,393,140**~~1,159,043,140~~

Unappropriated Balance \$ 0"

SECTION 2.4.(c) Section 3.1 of S.L. 2014-100 reads as rewritten:

"**SECTION 3.1.** Appropriations from the State Highway Fund for the maintenance and operation of the Department of Transportation and for other purposes as enumerated are adjusted for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2015, according to the following schedule. Amounts set out in parentheses are reductions from Highway Fund Appropriations for the 2014-2015 fiscal year.

Current Operations – Highway Fund **2014-2015**

Department of Transportation	
Administration	\$ 1,949,344
Division of Highways	
Administration	0
Construction	0
Maintenance	53,407,586
Planning and Research	0
OSHA Program	(7,307)
Ferry Operations	(1,542,317)
State Aid to Municipalities	9,453,990
Intermodal Divisions	
Public Transportation	0
Aviation	(800,000)
Rail	(960,325)
Bicycle and Pedestrian	(30,043)
Governor's Highway Safety	(5,699)
Division of Motor Vehicles	(988,255)
Other State Agencies, Reserves, Transfers	7,354,812
Capital Improvements	0
<u>Reductions Made Pursuant to Senate Bill 20:</u>	
<u>"IRC Update/Motor Fuel Tax Changes," 2015 Regular Session</u>	<u>(10,050,000)</u>

Total Highway Fund Appropriations ~~\$1,984,142,286~~ \$1,974,092,286

SECTION 2.4.(d) Section 3.2 of S.L. 2014-100 reads as rewritten:

"SECTION 3.2. Section 3.2 of S.L. 2013-360 is repealed. The Highway Fund availability used in adjusting the 2014-2015 fiscal year budget is shown below:

Highway Fund Availability Statement

2014-2015

Unreserved Fund Balance	\$	12,000,000
Estimated Revenue		1,973,750,000
Adjustment to Revenue Availability:		
Motor Fuel Tax (Shallow Draft Navigation Channel Dredging Fund)		(1,677,134)
Motor Fuel Tax Refund Repeal (Taxi Cabs)		69,420
<u>Reductions Made Pursuant to Senate Bill 20:</u>		
<u>"IRC Update/Motor Fuel Tax Changes," 2015 Regular Session</u>		<u>(10,050,000)</u>
Revised Total Highway Fund Availability		\$1,984,142,286 <u>\$1,974,092,286</u>

Unappropriated Balance

\$ 0"

SECTION 2.4.(e) For the 2014-2015 fiscal year, appropriations to each certified fund code within the Highway Fund are hereby reduced by one and two-fifths percent (1 2/5%), which shall amount to a total reduction of five million nine hundred eight thousand one hundred twenty-one dollars (\$5,908,121). In making the reductions required by this subsection, the following fund codes shall not be reduced:

- (1) 84210-0852
- (2) 84210-0862
- (3) 84210-0864
- (4) 84210-0865
- (5) 84210-0867
- (6) 84210-0868
- (7) 84210-0871
- (8) 84210-0873
- (9) 84210-0877
- (10) 84210-0878
- (11) 84210-0881
- (12) 84210-0882
- (13) 84210-0885
- (14) 84210-0889
- (15) 84210-0892
- (16) 84210-0893
- (17) 84210-0933
- (18) 84210-0934
- (19) 84210-0935
- (20) 84210-0937
- (21) 84210-1165
- (22) 84210-1260
- (23) 84210-7040
- (24) 84210-7615
- (25) 84210-7818
- (26) 84210-7821
- (27) 84210-7822
- (28) 84210-7824
- (29) 84210-7825
- (30) 84210-7826
- (31) 84210-7827
- (32) 84210-7828
- (33) 84210-7834
- (34) 84210-7836
- (35) 84210-7839
- (36) 84210-7841

SECTION 2.4.(f) For the 2014-2015 fiscal year, appropriations to each of the following certified fund codes within the Highway Fund are hereby reduced by one-half percent (1/2%), which shall amount to a total reduction of two million three hundred seventy-nine thousand nine hundred ninety-four dollars (\$2,379,994):

- (1) 84210-7821
- (2) 84210-7822
- (3) 84210-7841

SECTION 2.4.(g) For the 2014-2015 fiscal year, and notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the Director of the Budget and the Secretary of Revenue shall make the following reductions:

- (1) One million forty-five thousand two hundred dollars (\$1,045,200) to the total amount of funds appropriated pursuant to G.S. 136-41.1.
- (2) Sixteen thousand seven hundred fifty dollars (\$16,750) to the total amount of funds credited to the Wildlife Resources Fund pursuant to G.S. 105-449.126.
- (3) Sixteen thousand seven hundred fifty dollars (\$16,750) to the total amount of funds credited to the Shallow Draft Navigation Channel and Lake Dredging Fund pursuant to G.S. 105-449.126.

SECTION 2.4.(h) The Secretary of the Department of Transportation shall eliminate a minimum of 40 vacant positions within the Department of Transportation to achieve a total reduction of six hundred eighty-three thousand one hundred eighty-five dollars (\$683,185). The Secretary of the Department of Transportation may use lapsed salaries to meet the reduction required under this subsection.

SECTION 2.4.(i) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the total amount of funds generated by the reductions in this act shall be used to support the maintenance and operation of the Department of Transportation and for other purposes as enumerated for the Department of Transportation in S.L. 2014-100. To the extent any of the funds generated by the reductions in this act are deemed unappropriated, these funds are hereby appropriated. The Director of the Budget shall modify the certified budget to reflect the reductions to appropriations made in this act.

SECTION 2.5. Sections 2.2 and 2.3 of this Part become effective January 1, 2016. Except as otherwise provided, this act is effective when it becomes law. Section 2.1 of this act expires January 1, 2016.

PART III. EFFECTIVE DATE

SECTION 3.1. Except as otherwise provided, this act is effective when it becomes law.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 31st day of March, 2015.

s/ Philip E. Berger
President Pro Tempore of the Senate

s/ Tim Moore
Speaker of the House of Representatives

s/ Pat McCrory
Governor

Approved 5:14 p.m. this 31st day of March, 2015