A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS FROM THE CORONAVIRUS RELIEF FUND TO THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA CENTER FOR PUBLIC MEDIA FOR THE AT-HOME LEARNING INITIATIVE TO EXPAND STUDENT LEARNING EXPERIENCES IN RESPONSE TO THE IMPACTS OF COVID-19.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. Transfer of Funds from Reserves to Relief Fund. – The State Controller shall transfer the sum of one million nine hundred thirty-two thousand seven hundred fifty-eight dollars ($1,932,758) for the 2019-2020 fiscal year from the Coronavirus Relief Reserve established in Section 2.1 of S.L. 2020-4 to the Coronavirus Relief Fund established in Section 2.2 of S.L. 2020-4.

SECTION 2. Appropriation of Funds from Relief Fund. – There is appropriated from the Coronavirus Relief Fund to the Office of State Budget and Management the sum of one million nine hundred thirty-two thousand seven hundred fifty-eight dollars ($1,932,758) in nonrecurring funds for the 2019-2020 fiscal year to be allocated to the University of North Carolina Center for Public Media (UNC-TV) for the At-Home Learning Initiative (AHL). The AHL is a collaboration between UNC-TV and the Department of Public Instruction providing a three-phase response to the impact of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) on student learning that includes ongoing research and evaluation. Phase one of the AHL distributed existing media content, repurposed the North Carolina Channel, and integrated current UNC-TV main channel programming to provide 41 hours per day of real-time curriculum-informed programming and activities. The funds allocated pursuant to this act shall be used for two additional phases of the AHL as follows:

(1) The sum of nine hundred seven thousand seven hundred fifty-eight dollars ($907,758) shall be used in phase two of the AHL to customize the content for all North Carolina students and to meet State educational requirements through remediation blocks and qualifying instruction. During this phase, all programming shall be localized via content featuring North Carolina teachers to personalize the student experience. Continuity and customization shall be particularly important due to the undetermined duration and future impact of COVID-19.

(2) The sum of one million twenty-five thousand dollars ($1,025,000) shall be used in phase three of the AHL to fortify all statewide services and broaden the AHL’s current focus from K-12 students to workforce development and to assist those desiring new skills necessary in North Carolina’s evolving
economy. Phase three shall include expanding distance learning initiatives across all technology platforms and into all 100 counties of the State, including the creation and distribution of augmented reality field trips integrating North Carolina destinations and historical events, related teacher training, and additional customized content in collaboration with the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources. Phase three actions shall focus on fortifying a new model of learning so that it can be employed as a development tool during an uninterrupted school year and as a learning bridge during emergencies. The expansion may also include investigating specialized content for students with specific learning challenges, language barriers, or unique family situations, such as military families.

SECTION 3. By September 15, 2020, UNC-TV, in collaboration with the Department of Public Instruction, shall report on the progress of the use of the appropriated funds received pursuant to this act to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee.

SECTION 4. Of the funds appropriated from the Coronavirus Relief Fund by this act, funds shall only be used for necessary eligible expenditures incurred during the period that begins on March 1, 2020, and ends on December 30, 2020. The funds appropriated by this act shall not revert at the end of the 2019-2020 fiscal year but shall remain available to expend until December 30, 2020.

SECTION 5. This act is effective when it becomes law.