

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA

SESSION 1991

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HOUSE BILL 729\*

Short Title: Pork Promotion Assessment.

(Public)

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Sponsors: Representative James.

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Referred to: Agriculture.

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April 11, 1991

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
2 AN ACT TO AUTHORIZE A PORK PROMOTION ASSESSMENT.

3 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

4 Section 1. Chapter 106 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new  
5 Article to read:

6 **"ARTICLE 66.**

7 **"PORK PROMOTION ASSESSMENT ACT.**

8 **"§ 106-790. Title.**

9 This Article shall be known as the 'Pork Promotion Assessment Act.'

10 **"§ 106-791. Purpose.**

11 It is in the public interest for the State to enable producers of swine to assess  
12 themselves in order to raise funds to promote the interests of the pork industry.

13 **"§ 106-792. Definitions.**

14 As used in this Article:

15 (1) 'Association' means the North Carolina Pork Producers Association,  
16 Inc., a North Carolina nonprofit corporation.

17 (2) 'Commissioner' means the Commissioner of Agriculture.

18 (3) 'Department' means the North Carolina Department of Agriculture.

19 (4) 'Porcine animal' means swine raised for feeder pigs, seed stock or  
20 slaughter.

21 **"§ 106-793. Referendum.**

22 (a) The Association may conduct among pork producers a referendum upon the  
23 question of whether an assessment shall be levied upon the sale of porcine animals as  
24 set forth herein.

1       (b) The amount of the proposed assessment shall be set forth on the referendum  
2 ballot. The assessment shall not exceed five cents (5¢) per head of swine produced or  
3 sold in this State. The assessment may be set at less than five cents (5¢) per head by the  
4 Association, and may be increased on an annual basis by no more than one cent (1¢) per  
5 head, subject to the maximum of five cents (5¢) per head.

6       (c) The Board of Directors of the Association shall determine who may vote in  
7 the referendum, as prescribed by Article II of the Bylaws of the Association.

8       (d) The referendum shall be conducted under rules and procedures determined by  
9 the Association. The Association may provide for balloting by mail. Any dispute over  
10 eligibility to vote or any other matter relating to the referendum shall be determined by  
11 the Association. The Association shall make reasonable efforts to provide pork  
12 producers with notice of the referendum and an opportunity to vote.

13       (e) If more than half of the votes cast in the referendum are in favor of the  
14 assessment, the Association shall so notify the Commissioner and the assessment shall  
15 be collected as set forth herein.

16 **"§ 106-794. Collection of assessment.**

17       (a) Upon passage of the referendum, the Commissioner of Agriculture shall  
18 notify all buyers of porcine animals of the assessment. The assessment shall be  
19 deducted from the purchase price of the animal at the time of sale and remitted to the  
20 Commissioner no later than the tenth day of the following month. The Commissioner  
21 shall provide forms to buyers for reporting the assessment. If the total assessments due  
22 in any month are less than twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) or more. All buyers shall file at  
23 least one report in each calendar quarter, regardless of the amount due. All assessments  
24 received by the Commissioner shall be promptly remitted to the Association.

25       (b) Buyers of swine shall keep records of the number of swine purchased and the  
26 date of purchase. The Association may bring an action in a court of competent  
27 jurisdiction to recover any unpaid assessments, plus the reasonable cost incurred in such  
28 action, including attorney fees, as approved by the court. All information or records  
29 regarding swine purchases by individual buyers shall be kept confidential by employees  
30 or agents of the Department and the Association, and shall not be disclosed except by  
31 court order.

32       (c) Any pork producer may request a refund of assessments paid under this act  
33 by submitting a written request for a refund to the Association within 30 days after the  
34 assessment has been collected by the buyer. The refund request must be accompanied  
35 by proof of payment of the assessment satisfactory to the Association. The Association  
36 shall mail the refund to the producer within 30 days of receipt of a properly documented  
37 refund request.

38 **"§ 106-795. Use of assessments.**

39       Assessments collected under this Article shall be used for promoting the interests of  
40 the pork industry, including representation before governmental bodies on matters  
41 affecting the pork industry. In order to prevent duplication of effort, these funds shall  
42 not be used for activities funded under the Pork Promotion, Research, and Consumer  
43 Information Act of 1985, 7 USC 4801, et seq.

44 **"§ 106-796. Termination of assessment.**

1       Upon receipt of petition signed by at least ten percent (10%) of the pork producers in  
2 North Carolina known to the Association, the Commissioner shall notify the  
3 Association, and the Association shall, within six months, conduct a referendum upon  
4 the question of the continuation of the assessment. If a majority of the votes cast in  
5 such referendum are against continuation of the assessment, or if the Association fails to  
6 conduct a referendum within the six-month period, the collection of the assessment shall  
7 cease at the end of the six-month period. If a majority of the votes cast in such  
8 referendum are in favor of the continuation of the assessment, then no subsequent  
9 referendum shall be held for a least three years."

10           Sec. 2. G.S. 106-550 reads as rewritten:

11       **"§ 106-550. Policy as to promotion of use of, and markets for, farm products.**

12       It is declared to be in the interest of the public welfare that the North Carolina  
13 farmers who are producers of livestock, poultry, field crops and other agricultural  
14 products, including cattle, swine, sheep, broilers, turkeys, commercial eggs, peanuts,  
15 cotton, potatoes, peaches, apples, berries, vegetables and other fruits of all kinds, as well  
16 as bulbs and flowers and other agricultural products having a domestic or foreign  
17 market, shall be permitted and encouraged to act jointly and in cooperation with  
18 growers, handlers, dealers and processors of such products in promoting and  
19 stimulating, by advertising and other methods, the increased production, use and sale,  
20 domestic and foreign, of any and all of such agricultural commodities. The provisions of  
21 this Article, however, shall not include the agricultural products of tobacco,  
22 strawberries, ~~or~~ strawberry plants, or porcine animals, with respect to which separate  
23 provisions have been made."

24           Sec. 3. This act is effective upon ratification.