

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2001**

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**HOUSE BILL 776**

Short Title: Cape Fear Aquarium Planning Funds.

(Public)

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Sponsors: Representative Morris.

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Referred to: Appropriations.

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March 26, 2001

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS FOR PLANNING OF A PROPOSED CAPE  
FEAR RIVER AQUARIUM.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

**SECTION 1.** The General Assembly finds that:

- (1) The Cape Fear River is formed by the confluence of the Deep and Haw Rivers in Chatham County and flows generally southeast, past Fayetteville, Elizabethtown, and Wilmington, to enter the Atlantic Ocean at Southport after a course of about 200 miles.
- (2) The Cape Fear River and its tributaries are an invaluable natural resource available to the citizens of North Carolina, providing freshwater for business and residential uses, routes for waterborne transportation, various recreational opportunities, and critical wildlife and fisheries habitats.
- (3) A series of locks and dams makes the Cape Fear River navigable from Wilmington to Fayetteville. In the 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries, Scottish settlers immigrated to the Cape Fear River region and had a significant influence on the development of southeastern North Carolina.
- (4) A State aquarium in the Fayetteville area, developed in conjunction with Fayetteville State University, Fayetteville Technical Community College, the Fayetteville City Council, and the Cumberland County Commissioners, could offer area history, environmental education, and nature studies to the public. These institutions, through the aquarium, could also cooperate with the nonprofit Cape Fear River Assembly to pursue scientific study and economic analysis necessary to develop policies for proper management of the Cape Fear River and the river basin.

1           **SECTION 2.** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the  
2 Department of Environment and Natural Resources the sum of five hundred thousand  
3 dollars (\$500,000) for the 2001-2002 fiscal year for planning for a proposed Cape Fear  
4 River Aquarium to be developed in cooperation with Fayetteville State University,  
5 Fayetteville Technical Community College, the Fayetteville City Council, the  
6 Cumberland County Commissioners, and the Cape Fear River Assembly. In addition to  
7 promoting an awareness, understanding, and appreciation of the diverse natural and  
8 cultural resources associated with the Cape Fear River basin, the purpose of the  
9 aquarium will be to monitor and study the conditions and status of the river basin and to  
10 advise the General Assembly of its findings and recommendations.

11           **SECTION 3.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2001.