

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2003**

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HOUSE BILL 1236

Short Title: Study Comp. for Eugenic Sterilization. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Womble; Parmon, Insko, and Ross.

Referred to: Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House.

April 24, 2003

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT TO DIRECT THE LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH COMMISSION TO STUDY
WAYS TO COMPENSATE AND COUNSEL PERSONS WHO WERE
STERILIZED THROUGH THE STATE'S EUGENIC STERILIZATION
PROGRAM.

Whereas, during the early part of the 20th century, social reformers advocated eugenic sterilization as a solution to problems such as mental retardation and mental illness; and

Whereas, in 1907, Indiana was the first state to pass a eugenic sterilization program, and eventually more than 30 states passed these laws, with North Carolina following in 1929; and

Whereas, from 1933 to 1974, North Carolina's Eugenics Board reviewed petitions for sterilizations, and sterilizations were ordered in more than 90% of the cases before the Board; and

Whereas, researchers estimate that more than 7,600 people were sterilized in North Carolina between 1929 and 1974, ranking North Carolina third among the states operating eugenic sterilization programs; and

Whereas, while most states sharply curtailed their sterilization programs after World War II, nearly four-fifths of sterilizations in North Carolina were performed after 1945, and by the late 1960s, more than 60% of those persons sterilized in the State were black and 99% were female; and

Whereas, the governors of Virginia, Oregon, South Carolina, and North Carolina have issued apologies for these forced sterilizations, and Governor Easley established a committee to investigate the eugenic sterilization program and consider compensation or counseling services for these persons; and

Whereas, the General Assembly finds that persons sterilized as a result of the State's eugenic sterilization program should be compensated; Now, therefore, The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

1 **SECTION 1.** The Legislative Research Commission shall study ways that
2 persons who were sterilized through the State's eugenic sterilization program shall be
3 compensated and counseled to deal with that experience.

4 **SECTION 2.** The Legislative Research Commission shall report the results
5 of its study, including any recommended legislation, to the 2004 Regular Session of the
6 2003 General Assembly on or before its convening.

7 **SECTION 3.** It is the goal of the General Assembly after reviewing the
8 results of the Commission's study to create and fund a program during the 2004-2005
9 fiscal year to compensate, in some form, and counsel persons who were sterilized
10 through the State's eugenic sterilization program.

11 **SECTION 4.** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the General
12 Assembly the sum of twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) for the 2003-2004 fiscal
13 year to fund the study required in this act.

14 **SECTION 5.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2003.