

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2005**

**HOUSE BILL 1280
RATIFIED BILL**

AN ACT TO DIRECT THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION TO REPORT TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON STRATEGIES TO BEST UTILIZE FEDERAL FUNDS FOR RAIL IMPROVEMENTS SUCH AS SERVICE TO WESTERN AND SOUTHEASTERN NORTH CAROLINA AND RESTORATION OF THE WALLACE TO CASTLE HAYNE RAIL CORRIDOR.

Whereas, expanding and upgrading passenger, freight, commuter, and short line rail service is important to the economy of North Carolina; and

Whereas, the citizens of this State have stated their support for expanded passenger rail service through resolutions from over 100 cities, towns, and organizations submitted to the House Interim Committee on Expanding Rail Service in the fall of 2004; and

Whereas, Congress is debating reauthorization of the federal Surface Transportation Program; and

Whereas, Congress is considering new and innovative means of financing construction of transportation infrastructure, including highways, transit, intermodal, and rail projects; and

Whereas, Congress is debating reform of the National Railroad Passenger Corporation, known as Amtrak, and the result may be more responsibilities for rail transferred to the states; and

Whereas, it is in the best interest of the State of North Carolina to respond in a timely way to these proposed changes as they impact our transportation programs and economic development opportunities; and

Whereas, many rail corridors in the State, such as the Wallace to Castle Hayne rail corridor, are in need of restoration and improvement; and

Whereas, many rail initiatives in the State, including service to western and southeastern North Carolina, are in need of federal and State investment; Now, therefore,

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. The Department of Transportation is directed, no more than 60 days following enactment of reauthorization of the federal Surface Transportation Program, to develop and report its recommendations on strategies, using funds available to the Department, to provide matching funds so the State can leverage the maximum federal and private participation in funding needed rail initiatives, such as the restoration of the rail corridor from Wallace to Castle Hayne, a rail connection between north-south and east-west routes in the vicinity of Pembroke, service to Winston-Salem, and service to the western and southeastern parts of the State.

SECTION 2. The Department shall submit its report to the Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation or, if the General Assembly is not in session, to the Joint Legislative Transportation Oversight Committee.

SECTION 3. This act is effective when it becomes law.
In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 20th day of
July, 2005.

Marc Basnight
President Pro Tempore of the Senate

James B. Black
Speaker of the House of Representatives

Michael F. Easley
Governor

Approved _____m. this _____ day of _____, 2005