

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2005

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HOUSE DRH50570-LR-190 (05/12)

Short Title: E-NC Internet Connectivity/Jobs Funding. (Public)

Sponsors: Representative Tolson.

Referred to:

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT REPEALING THE E-NC AUTHORITY SUNSET PROVISION AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS TO THE E-NC AUTHORITY FOR HIGH-SPEED
INTERNET CONNECTIVITY INCENTIVE GRANTS AND FOR JOB
CREATION THROUGH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT OF
E-NC BUSINESS AND TECHNOLOGY TELECENTERS.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. The General Assembly finds that:

- (1) The e-NC Authority, created in S.L. 2003-425 to continue the work of the Rural Internet Access Authority, is successfully pursuing its mandated goals, increasing access to affordable high-speed Internet and creating 21st century jobs through technology-based economic development in the rural areas and distressed urban areas of the State.
- (2) The e-NC Business and Technology Telecenters (BTTs) serve as catalysts to technology-based economic development in some of North Carolina's most distressed regions by helping to grow existing small businesses, bringing new kinds of businesses into rural communities and regions, stimulating and supporting entrepreneurship, and creating 21st century jobs.
- (3) e-NC works successfully with local governments and educational institutions to strengthen their technology capacities and services to their communities, making available to the citizens technology services and resources, training, and public access to computers and the Internet.

SECTION 2. Section 4 of S.L. 2003-475 reads as rewritten:

"SECTION 4. Sections 1 and 2 of this act become effective December 31, 2003, with the e-NC Authority hereby designated as the successor entity of the Rural Internet

1 Access Authority that will dissolve on that date, as provided by Section 5 of S.L.
2 2000-149. The remainder of this act is effective when it becomes law. ~~The e-NC
3 Authority created in this act is dissolved effective December 31, 2006. This act is
4 repealed effective December 31, 2006. Part 2F of Article 10 of Chapter 143B of the
5 General Statutes and G.S. 120-123(77), as enacted by this act, are repealed effective
6 December 31, 2006."~~

7 **SECTION 3.(a)** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the e-NC
8 Authority the sum of seven million five hundred thousand dollars (\$7,500,000) for the
9 2006-2007 fiscal year for Internet connectivity incentive grants. These funds shall not
10 revert. It is the intent of the General Assembly that these funds shall be used to allow at
11 least seventy percent (70%) of the households in each county to have the ability to
12 access high-speed Internet services by 2008. Funds for connectivity incentives should
13 be committed to service providers by July 1, 2008. These incentive grants shall be
14 competitive and shall require at least a fifty percent (50%) cash match from the
15 participating service providers. Companies must ensure the number of additional
16 households to be served as a result of this funding. The e-NC Authority may use up to
17 five percent (5%) of these funds to cover its expenses in grant letting and monitoring.

18 **SECTION 3.(b)** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the e-NC
19 Authority the sum of one million six hundred thousand dollars (\$1,600,000) for the
20 2006-2007 fiscal year for continued and expanded funding of the e-NC Business and
21 Technology Telecenter (BTT) program. The e-NC Authority may use up to five percent
22 (5%) of these funds to cover its expenses in program development and implementation
23 of activity areas with the BTTs. The e-NC Authority may contract with other State
24 agencies, The University of North Carolina, the Community Colleges System Office,
25 and nonprofit organizations to assist with BTT program development and the evaluation
26 of program activities.

27 **SECTION 3.(c)** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the e-NC
28 Authority the sum of three hundred thousand dollars (\$300,000) for the 2006-2007
29 fiscal year for competitive innovation grants to e-communities, BTTs, and Local
30 E-government Utilization Program participants for the development of model programs
31 and value-added products that enhance the economy of their regions.

32 **SECTION 4.** The e-NC Authority shall work cooperatively with the
33 following entities to carry out the purposes of this act: the Department of Commerce,
34 The University of North Carolina, the Community Colleges System Office, the local
35 councils of government, the local chambers of commerce, the North Carolina
36 Association of County Commissioners, the North Carolina League of Municipalities,
37 the Regional Economic Development Partnerships, local economic developers, and the
38 private and nonprofit sectors.

39 **SECTION 5.** Section 3 of this act becomes effective July 1, 2006. The
40 remainder of this act is effective when it becomes law.