

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2007

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HOUSE BILL 2547

Short Title: Study P & N Rail Line.

(Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Neumann, Clary, and Current (Primary Sponsors).

Referred to: Transportation.

May 26, 2008

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1
2 AN ACT TO DIRECT THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION TO STUDY
3 PIEDMONT AND NORTHERN RAILWAY LINE IN GASTON COUNTY TO
4 DETERMINE THE COST OF BRINGING BACK INTO SERVICE THE FULL
5 LINE.

6 Whereas, the Piedmont and Northern Railway (the P&N) was proposed in
7 1909 by William States Lee, vice-president of Southern Power Company; and

8 Whereas, in 1910 Piedmont Traction Company was incorporated to provide
9 street railway service in and around Gastonia; and

10 Whereas, Southern Power Company capitalized the new P&N after merging
11 Piedmont Traction and a South Carolina line, and by 1912 extended service from
12 Gastonia to Charlotte with a heavy electric interurban railroad, providing passenger,
13 freight, and mixed service; and

14 Whereas, the P&N was a heavy carrier of both freight and passengers; and

15 Whereas, passenger service on the P&N was discontinued in the early 1950s
16 and the line dieselized in 1954; and

17 Whereas, the P&N was merged into the Seaboard Coast Line Railroad (now
18 CSX) in 1969; and

19 Whereas, CSX has abandoned much of the line in Gaston County, to the
20 detriment of economic development in Gaston County; and

21 Whereas, the Rail Corridor Preservation Act, passed by the General
22 Assembly in 1988, gave the Department of Transportation authority to purchase
23 railroads and preserve rail corridors for "future rail use and interim compatible uses",
24 and an amendment in 1989 declared it a public purpose for the Department of
25 Transportation to reassemble critically important lost portions of rail corridors by
26 condemnation; and

27 Whereas, the Department of Transportation in 1991 acquired 14.6 miles of
28 the old P&N right-of-way from Mount Holly to Gastonia to Belmont, as well as .77

1 miles in Charlotte, across the Norfolk Southern mainline from Bank of America
2 Stadium to preserve a Charlotte terminus; Now, therefore,
3 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

4 **SECTION 1.** The Department of Transportation is directed to study the
5 P&N line in Gaston County to determine the cost to bring the full line back into
6 operation.

7 **SECTION 2.** This act is effective when it becomes law.