

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2007

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SENATE BILL 865*

Short Title: Water Resources Grant Funds.-AB (Public)

Sponsors: Senators Snow, Swindell; and Queen.

Referred to: Appropriations/Base Budget.

March 19, 2007

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS TO THE DEPARTMENT OF
3 ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES FOR REGIONAL COUNCILS
4 OF GOVERNMENT TO DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A WATER RESOURCE
5 MANAGEMENT PROGRAM.

6 Whereas, North Carolina's regional councils provide local governments in
7 every part of the State with regional means to address water quality issues that stretch
8 beyond any local government's boundaries; and

9 Whereas, safe and reliable water is critical to every community's economic
10 development potential, as well as to existing citizens and businesses; and

11 Whereas, all water supply and water quality issues cross local boundaries,
12 calling for regional coordination to assure that water remains safe and available; and

13 Whereas, regional councils are in a unique position to help local governments
14 deal collectively with water resource issues, identifying solutions that are tailored to
15 conditions and water needs in each region, especially those struggling to meet
16 infrastructure and environmental challenges; and

17 Whereas, regional councils, by working in concert with the Department of
18 Environment and Natural Resources, can bring local governments together to address
19 critical water supply and water quality at a regional scale; Now, therefore,
20 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

21 **SECTION 1.** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the
22 Department of Environment and Natural Resources the sum of one million four hundred
23 thousand dollars (\$1,400,000) for the 2007-2008 fiscal year and the sum of one million
24 four hundred thousand dollars (\$1,400,000) for the 2008-2009 fiscal year. Of the funds
25 appropriated by this section, the sum of eighty thousand dollars (\$80,000) shall be
26 allocated each fiscal year to each of the State's 17 regional councils of government to be
27 used by each regional council of government to develop and implement a nonregulatory
28 water resource management program through the voluntary cooperation of local
29 governments, water users, other stakeholders, and the Department of Environment and

1 Natural Resources. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources may use up
2 to forty thousand dollars (\$40,000) each fiscal year for costs of administering this act.

3 **SECTION 2.** In developing and implementing the water resource
4 management program required under Section 1 of this act, each regional council of
5 government shall carry out a plan of work that may include the following:

- 6 (1) Development of one or more multijurisdictional water resource
7 management plans in cooperation with local governments and key
8 water user stakeholders, and the Department of Environment and
9 Natural Resources, based on the water resource needs, geographic and
10 hydrologic features in the region, including both surface and
11 groundwater resources as appropriate to the region.
- 12 (2) Convening coalitions of local governments and major water users in
13 the respective regions to set strategies for sustaining water resources
14 necessary to support sound economic development.
- 15 (3) Implementation of multijurisdictional projects and activities that
16 address water quantity and water quality problems identified in water
17 resource management plans.
- 18 (4) Identification of opportunities for connections between water systems
19 and wastewater system providers to achieve efficiencies and make
20 systems more drought resistant.

21 **SECTION 3.(a)** The funds allocated to a regional council of government by
22 Section 1 of this act shall be paid in two equal installments. The first payment to a
23 regional council of government shall be made only after compliance with subdivision
24 (1) of subsection (b) of this section, and the second payment shall be made only after
25 compliance with subdivision (2) of subsection (b) of this section.

26 **SECTION 3.(b)** Each regional council of government receiving funds under
27 this act shall comply with the following requirements:

- 28 (1) By September 1, 2007, the council shall present to the Department of
29 Environment and Natural Resources and the Fiscal Research Division
30 the council's annual plan of work, goals, objectives, and proposed
31 expenditures.
- 32 (2) By March 1, 2008, the council shall submit to the Department of
33 Environment and Natural Resources and the Fiscal Research Division
34 a report of the council's accomplishments and of the actual
35 expenditures of funds appropriated by this act during the previous
36 reporting period.

37 **SECTION 4.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2007.