GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA SESSION 2009

H HOUSE BILL 618

Short Title:	Funds/Farmland Preservation Trust Fund. (Public)
Sponsors:	Representatives Harrison, Allen, Hill, Haire (Primary Sponsors); K. Alexander, M. Alexander, Blue, Bordsen, Braxton, Brisson, Brubaker, Bryant, Carney, Coates, Cole, Cotham, Crawford, Dickson, Earle, England, Faison, Farmer-Butterfield, Fisher, E. Floyd, Gibson, Glazier, Goforth, Goodwin, Hall, Harrell, Holliman, Howard, Hughes, Hurley, Insko, Jackson, Jeffus, Jones, Justice, Langdon, Lewis, Love, Lucas, Luebke, Mackey, Martin, McLawhorn, Parmon, Pierce, Rapp, Sager, Samuelson, Spear, Starnes, Steen, Stewart, Sutton, Tarleton, Tolson, Tucker, Underhill, Wainwright, E. Warren, R. Warren, Weiss, Whilden, Wiley, Wilkins, Williams, Womble, Wray, and Yongue.
Referred to:	Appropriations.

March 17, 2009

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS FOR FARMLAND PRESERVATION.

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Whereas, North Carolina's 52,913 farms provide food, fiber, economic activity, wildlife habitat, natural resource protection, open space, and cultural heritage to North Carolinians; and

Whereas, farms improve the quality of life for all North Carolinians while requiring little or no public services or infrastructure; and

Whereas, agriculture and agribusiness are North Carolina's leading industry, generating nearly \$71 billion for the economy and employing one in five members of our workforce; and

Whereas, a productive and stable agricultural sector is important to farm families, rural communities, local economies, and North Carolina's economic recovery; and

Whereas, landowners are looking for a wider range of options to help them develop sustainable and profitable farms and pass them along to future generations; and

Whereas, North Carolina now has 67 voluntary agriculture districts which support farmland preservation; and

Whereas, numerous State and local organizations have passed resolutions to support the Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund, and nearly one-fourth of all counties have passed or are currently considering county farmland protection plans; and

Whereas, funds appropriated to the Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund have been leveraged with funds from federal and local sources to preserve agricultural land valued in excess of \$55 million since 2005; and

Whereas, funds appropriated to the Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund have been used to develop agricultural processing facilities that will benefit small family farms; and

Whereas, the U.S. Department of Agriculture conducts an agricultural census every five years, and the results of the 2007 census revealed a significant loss of 600,000 acres in farmland in the State; and



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Whereas, in 2007, the State had 8.5 million acres of farmland compared to 9.1 million acres in 2002; Now, therefore,

3 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

4 5 6 **SECTION 1.** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the North Carolina Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund under G.S. 106-744 the sum of four million dollars (\$4,000,000) for the 2009-2010 fiscal year to be used for the acquisition of agricultural conservation easements or for the preservation of farmland as provided in Article 61 of Chapter 106 of the General Statutes.

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SECTION 2. This act becomes effective July 1, 2009.