

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2013

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SENATE BILL 769\*

Short Title: Boost State Nature/Heritage Tourism Industry. (Public)

Sponsors: Senators Rabon and Brock (Primary Sponsors).

Referred to: Commerce.

May 19, 2014

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
2 AN ACT TO CREATE THE NATURE AND HERITAGE TOURISM ADVISORY BOARD;  
3 TO REQUIRE THE CREATION OF A STATE NATURE AND HERITAGE TOURISM  
4 GUIDE; AND TO REQUIRE CONTRACTING WITH A CONSULTANT TO MAKE  
5 RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING THE OPERATION OF STATE HISTORIC AND  
6 CULTURAL SITES, AS RECOMMENDED BY THE LRC COMMITTEE ON  
7 CULTURAL AND NATURAL RESOURCES.

8 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

9 SECTION 1. Article 10 of Chapter 143B of the General Statutes is amended by  
10 adding a new Part to read:

11 "Part 2L. Nature and Heritage Tourism Advisory Board.

12 **"§ 143B-437.110. Nature and Heritage Tourism Advisory Board.**

13 (a) Creation. – There is created the Nature and Heritage Tourism Advisory Board,  
14 hereinafter referred to in this Part as the Advisory Board. The Advisory Board shall be located  
15 administratively within the Division of Tourism, Film, and Sports Development of the  
16 Department of Commerce but shall exercise its authority independently of that Department.

17 (b) Membership. – The Advisory Board shall consist of nine members who have  
18 knowledge and experience of the nature and heritage tourism industry, appointed as follows:

19 (1) Three members shall be appointed by the Governor.

20 (2) Three members shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House of  
21 Representatives.

22 (3) Three members shall be appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the  
23 Senate.

24 (c) Terms of Office and Vacancies. – Appointed members shall serve four-year terms  
25 of office beginning on September 1. Vacancy appointments shall be made by the appointing  
26 authority for the remainder of the term of office.

27 (d) Chair and Quorum. – The Advisory Board shall annually elect a chair from among  
28 its membership. The chair shall preside over the Advisory Board's meetings. A majority of the  
29 Advisory Board constitutes a quorum.

30 (e) Staffing and Expenses. – Staff to the Advisory Board shall be provided by the  
31 Department of Commerce. Members of the Advisory Board shall be reimbursed for travel and  
32 subsistence expenses at the rates allowed to State officers and employees by G.S. 138-6(a).

33 (f) Meetings. – Meetings of the Advisory Board shall be held upon the call of the chair.

34 (g) Powers. – The Advisory Board shall have the power to make recommendations to  
35 the Secretary of the Department of Commerce and to the General Assembly with respect to the  
36 following:



- 1           (1)    Methods for increasing nature and heritage tourism to and within the State.
- 2           (2)    Methods for increasing the level of private investment in the State's nature
- 3                   and heritage tourism industry.
- 4           (3)    Identification of the nature and heritage tourism potential of State-owned
- 5                   facilities and assets.
- 6           (4)    Methods of advertising the State's nature and heritage tourism industry.
- 7           (5)    Improvement of interagency cooperation with respect to enhancing and
- 8                   marketing the State's nature and heritage tourism industry."

9           **SECTION 2.** The Department of Commerce, in conjunction with the Department  
10 of Cultural Resources, the Wildlife Resources Commission, the Department of Agriculture and  
11 Consumer Services, and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, shall develop  
12 a guidebook on the State's nature and heritage tourism sites. The guidebook shall meet industry  
13 standards for tour guidebooks and shall contain information about nature and heritage tourism  
14 sites in all regions of the State. No later than October 1, 2015, the Department of Commerce  
15 shall make the guidebook available without charge to the public electronically and in physical  
16 form at all places at which information about tourism in this State is routinely distributed.

17           **SECTION 3.** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of  
18 Commerce the sum of one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) for the 2014-2015 fiscal year  
19 to hire a consultant to review the operation of State historic and cultural sites and to make  
20 recommendations for maximizing their value to the citizens of this State while simultaneously  
21 reducing the cost to the State for their operation. State agencies and employees shall fully  
22 cooperate with the consultant by providing requested information about the operation of State  
23 historic and cultural sites. The consultant shall report its findings to the Department of Cultural  
24 Resources, to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, to the Department of  
25 Agriculture and Consumer Services, to the Wildlife Resources Commission, to the Legislative  
26 Research Commission, and to the Fiscal Research Division no later than October 1, 2015. The  
27 recommendations shall not include recommendations to sell State properties or to change the  
28 present use and character of State historic and cultural sites. The recommendations shall  
29 address at least the following:

- 30           (1)    Whether cost-savings could be realized by allowing private entities to
- 31                   operate certain State sites.
- 32           (2)    Whether limiting operating hours, mothballing, or imposing other
- 33                   cost-savings measures should be adopted at certain historic and cultural
- 34                   sites.

35           **SECTION 4.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2014.