

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2025

H

1

HOUSE BILL 645

Short Title: Friendly NC Act. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives von Haefen, Reives, Alston, and Lofton (Primary Sponsors).  
*For a complete list of sponsors, refer to the North Carolina General Assembly web site.*

Referred to: Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House

April 2, 2025

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
2 AN ACT TO ENSURE A FRIENDLY NORTH CAROLINA.

3 Whereas, it is the policy of the State of North Carolina to proactively foster economic  
4 and social progress, fostering a free and inclusive environment for all people; and

5 Whereas, regressive social policies have deterred potential residents, workforce,  
6 businesses, and investors from engaging with the State, ultimately hampering its economic  
7 growth and reputation as a welcoming environment to live and work; and

8 Whereas, such policies fail to reflect the values of hospitality, community, and  
9 opportunity that North Carolinians hold dear; and

10 Whereas, it has been demonstrated in numerous research studies that jurisdictions  
11 with more inclusive social policies consistently correlate with a higher economic standard of  
12 living; and

13 Whereas, to maintain its position as one of the nation's fastest-growing states, foster  
14 long-term prosperity, and drive meaningful progress, North Carolina must promote  
15 nondiscrimination and ensure that it remains welcoming to all individuals, facilitating an  
16 inclusive and dynamic workforce and economy; Now, therefore,

17 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

18  
19 **PART I. HATE CRIME PREVENTION**

20  
21 **ENACT THE HATE CRIMES PREVENTION ACT**

22 **SECTION 1.1.(a)** G.S. 14-3 reads as rewritten:

23 "**§ 14-3. Punishment of misdemeanors, infamous offenses, offenses committed in secrecy**  
24 **and malice, or with deceit and intent to defraud, or ~~with ethnic animosity as a~~**  
25 **hate crime.**

26 ...

27 (c) If any Class 2 or Class 3 misdemeanor is committed ~~because of the~~ by a person  
28 motivated by, in whole or in part, a victim's race, color, religion, nationality, or country of origin,  
29 actual or perceived personally identifying characteristic, the offender shall be guilty of a Class 1  
30 misdemeanor. If any Class A1 or Class 1 misdemeanor offense is committed ~~because of the~~ by a  
31 person motivated by, in whole or in part, a victim's race, color, religion, nationality, or country  
32 of origin, actual or perceived personally identifying characteristic, the offender shall be guilty of  
33 a Class H felony.

34 (d) In addition to any other remedies at law or in equity, a victim of an offense punished  
35 under subsection (c) of this section, or an immediate family member of the victim, may, in a civil



1 action in any court of competent jurisdiction, obtain appropriate relief from the person who  
2 committed the offense, including actual damages, punitive damages, any reasonable attorneys'  
3 fees, and any other litigation costs reasonably incurred. For purposes of this subsection, the term  
4 (i) "actual damages" includes damages for emotional distress and (ii) "immediate family  
5 member" means a child, sibling, parent, grandparent, or legal guardian of the victim.

6 (e) In addition to any other remedies at law or in equity, a person who has been convicted  
7 of or who has pleaded guilty or no contest to having engaged in conduct in violation of subsection  
8 (c) of this section may be ordered to participate in a restorative justice session with the victim of  
9 the offense if the victim requests a restorative justice session. If restorative justice under this  
10 subsection is ordered, the court shall select a member of a local Human Relations Commission,  
11 an attorney, a mediator, or an alternative dispute resolution professional, who has training in  
12 racial equity education, to conduct the restorative justice session. All costs of a restorative justice  
13 session ordered under this subsection shall be paid by the defendant.

14 (f) For purposes of this section, the term "personally identifying characteristic" means  
15 any characteristic protected by the nondiscrimination provisions of the International Convention  
16 on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), identified in supporting decisions or General Comments  
17 of the United Nations Human Rights Committee (UNHRC), or both protected by the  
18 nondiscrimination provisions of the ICCPR and identified in supporting decisions or General  
19 Comments of the UNHRC."

20 **SECTION 1.1.(b)** G.S. 14-401.14 reads as rewritten:

21 "**§ 14-401.14. Ethnic intimidation; teaching any technique to be used for ethnic**  
22 **intimidation. Intimidation by hate crime; teaching any technique to be used in**  
23 **the commission of a hate crime.**

24 (a) If a person shall, because of race, color, religion, nationality, or country of origin,  
25 motivated by, in whole or in part, a person's actual or perceived personally identifying  
26 characteristic, shall assault another that person, or damage or deface the property of another that  
27 person, or threaten to do any such act, he the person shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor.

28 ...

29 (c) In addition to any other remedies at law or in equity, a victim of an offense committed  
30 under this section, or an immediate family member of the victim, may, in a civil action in any  
31 court of competent jurisdiction, obtain appropriate relief from the person who committed the  
32 offense, including actual damages, punitive damages, any reasonable attorneys' fees, and any  
33 other litigation costs reasonably incurred. For purposes of this subsection, the term (i) "actual  
34 damages" includes damages for emotional distress and (ii) "immediate family member" means a  
35 child, sibling, parent, grandparent, or legal guardian of the victim.

36 (d) In addition to any other remedies at law or in equity, a person who has been convicted  
37 of or who has pleaded guilty or no contest to having engaged in conduct in violation of subsection  
38 (a) of this section may be ordered to participate in a restorative justice session with the victim of  
39 the offense if the victim requests a restorative justice session. If restorative justice under this  
40 subsection is ordered, the court shall select a member of a local Human Relations Commission,  
41 an attorney, a mediator, or an alternative dispute resolution professional, who has training in  
42 racial equity education, to conduct the restorative justice session. All costs of a restorative justice  
43 session ordered under this subsection shall be paid by the defendant.

44 (e) For purposes of this section, the term "personally identifying characteristic" is as  
45 defined in G.S. 14-3."

46 **SECTION 1.1.(c)** G.S. 15A-1340.16(d)(17) reads as rewritten:

47 "(17) The offense for which the defendant stands convicted was committed against  
48 a victim because of the motivated by, in whole or in part, a victim's race, color,  
49 religion, nationality, or country of origin-actual or perceived personally  
50 identifying characteristic. For purposes of this subdivision, the term  
51 "personally identifying characteristic" is as defined in G.S. 14-3."

1           **SECTION 1.1.(d)** Article 8 of Chapter 14 of the General Statutes is amended by  
2 adding a new section to read:

3 **"§ 14-34.11. Felonious assault as a hate crime.**

4           (a) For purposes of this section, the term (i) "personally identifying characteristic" is as  
5 defined in G.S. 14-3 and (ii) "serious bodily injury" is bodily injury that creates a substantial risk  
6 of death or that causes serious permanent disfigurement, coma, a permanent or protracted  
7 condition that causes extreme pain, or permanent or protracted loss or impairment of the function  
8 of any bodily member or organ or that results in prolonged hospitalization.

9           (b) Anyone who, motivated by, in whole or in part, the actual or perceived personally  
10 identifying characteristic of a person, assaults that person and inflicts serious bodily injury to the  
11 person or attempts to assault that person and inflict serious bodily injury to the person is guilty  
12 of committing the offense of felonious assault as a hate crime.

13           (c) Except as provided otherwise by this section, an offense committed under this section  
14 is a Class F felony.

15           (d) An offense committed under this section is a Class E felony if either of the following  
16 applies:

17               (1) Death results from the offense.

18               (2) The offense includes a violation or attempted violation of any of the  
19 following:

20                   a. G.S. 14-39 (kidnapping).

21                   b. G.S. 14-27.21 (first-degree forcible rape).

22                   c. G.S. 14-27.22 (second-degree forcible rape).

23                   d. G.S. 14-27.26 (first-degree forcible sexual offense).

24                   e. G.S. 14-27.27 (second-degree forcible sexual offense).

25           (e) Evidence of expressions or associations of the accused may not be introduced as  
26 substantive evidence at trial unless the evidence specifically relates to the crime charged under  
27 this section. Nothing in this section shall affect the rules of evidence governing the impeachment  
28 of a witness.

29           (f) In addition to any other remedies at law or in equity, a victim of an offense committed  
30 under this section, or an immediate family member of the victim, may, in a civil action in any  
31 court of competent jurisdiction, obtain appropriate relief from the person who committed the  
32 offense, including actual damages, punitive damages, any reasonable attorneys' fees, and any  
33 other litigation costs reasonably incurred. For purposes of this subsection, the term (i) "actual  
34 damages" includes damages for emotional distress and (ii) "immediate family member" means a  
35 child, sibling, parent, grandparent, or legal guardian of the victim.

36           (g) In addition to any other remedies at law or in equity, a person who has been convicted  
37 of or who has pleaded guilty or no contest to having engaged in conduct in violation of subsection  
38 (b) of this section may be ordered to participate in a restorative justice session with the victim of  
39 the offense if the victim requests a restorative justice session. If restorative justice under this  
40 subsection is ordered, the court shall select a member of a local Human Relations Commission,  
41 an attorney, a mediator, or an alternative dispute resolution professional, who has training in  
42 racial equity education, to conduct the restorative justice session. All costs of a restorative justice  
43 session ordered under this subsection shall be paid by the defendant."

44           **SECTION 1.1.(e)** Article 13A of Chapter 143B of the General Statutes is amended  
45 by adding a new section to read:

46 **"§ 143B-1209. Hate crime statistics.**

47           (a) Establishment. – The State Bureau of Investigation shall collect, analyze, and  
48 disseminate information regarding the commission of offenses punishable under G.S. 14-3(c),  
49 14-401.14, or 14-34.11. The information collected, analyzed, and disseminated by the State  
50 Bureau of Investigation shall include all of the following:

51               (1) The total number of offenses committed for each type.

1           (2)    Identifying characteristics of the person who committed the offense and the  
2                victim from each offense.

3           (3)    The disposition of each offense.

4       (b)    Report by Law Enforcement Agencies. – By no later than the fifteenth day of each  
5       month, all State and local law enforcement agencies shall report information to the State Bureau  
6       of Investigation on offenses committed in the law enforcement agency's jurisdiction that the law  
7       enforcement agency determines to meet the criteria set forth in subsection (a) of this section. A  
8       report shall include (i) any information about the offenses required by the State Bureau of  
9       Investigation and (ii) only the offenses committed during the month prior to the date the report  
10       is submitted. The State Bureau of Investigation shall set the format in which reports are to be  
11       submitted under this subsection.

12       (c)    Report by the State Bureau of Investigation. – By January 15 of each year, the State  
13       Bureau of Investigation shall submit to the General Assembly a report on the information the  
14       State Bureau of Investigation collected and analyzed under subsection (a) of this section during  
15       the calendar year prior to the date the report is submitted. Additionally, the State Bureau of  
16       Investigation shall publish a copy of the report required under this subsection on its website.

17       (d)    Requests for Information. – Upon request of a local law enforcement agency, a unit  
18       of local government, or a State agency, the State Bureau of Investigation shall share any  
19       information collected and analyzed under subsection (a) of this section with the requesting local  
20       law enforcement agency, unit of local government, or State agency."

21       **SECTION 1.1.(f)** The State Bureau of Investigation shall develop and implement  
22       guidelines for (i) the information required to be submitted by local law enforcement agencies  
23       under G.S. 143B-1209(b), as enacted by subsection (e) of this section, and (ii) the format in which  
24       the information is to be reported by local law enforcement agencies under G.S. 143B-1209(b).  
25       The State Bureau of Investigation shall publish the guidelines required under this subsection on  
26       its website no later than 60 days prior to the date the first report is required to be submitted under  
27       G.S. 143B-1209.

28       **SECTION 1.1.(g)** Notwithstanding any provision of G.S. 143B-1209, as enacted by  
29       subsection (e) of this section, to the contrary, the first report required under G.S. 143B-1209(b)  
30       shall be submitted by February 15, 2026, and the first report required under G.S. 143B-1209(c)  
31       shall be submitted and published by January 15, 2027.

32       **SECTION 1.1.(h)** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the State Bureau  
33       of Investigation the sum of one million eight hundred ninety thousand dollars (\$1,890,000) in  
34       nonrecurring funds for the 2025-2026 fiscal year to cover any costs incurred in establishing the  
35       hate crimes statistics database required under G.S. 143B-1209(a), as enacted by subsection (e) of  
36       this section.

37       **SECTION 1.1.(i)** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the State Bureau  
38       of Investigation the sum of five hundred thirty thousand dollars (\$530,000) in recurring funds for  
39       the 2025-2026 fiscal year to hire an additional employee to manage the hate crimes statistics  
40       database required under G.S. 143B-1209(a), as enacted by subsection (e) of this section.

41       **SECTION 1.1.(j)** G.S. 17D-2(c) reads as rewritten:

42       "(c)    Duties of the academy. The North Carolina Justice Academy shall have, but is not  
43       limited to, the following functions:

44       ...

45       (5)    It shall develop and provide training to law enforcement officers on how to  
46       identify, respond to, and report a hate crime. For purposes of this subdivision,  
47       the term "hate crime" means an offense punishable under G.S. 14-3(c),  
48       14-401.14, or 14-34.11."

49       **SECTION 1.1.(k)** G.S. 17C-6(a) reads as rewritten:

1       "(a) In addition to powers conferred upon the Commission elsewhere in this Chapter, the  
2 Commission shall have the following powers, which shall be enforceable through its rules and  
3 regulations, certification procedures, or the provisions of G.S. 17C-10:

4       ...  
5       (2) Establish minimum educational and training standards that must be met in  
6 order to qualify for entry level employment and retention as a criminal justice  
7 officer in temporary or probationary status or in a permanent position. The  
8 standards for entry level employment shall include all of the following:

9       ...  
10       d. Education and training under G.S. 17D-2(c)(5) on how to identify,  
11       respond to, and report a hate crime.

12       ...  
13       (14) Establish minimum standards for in-service training for criminal justice  
14 officers. In-service training standards shall include all of the following:

15       ...  
16       j. Training under G.S. 17D-2(c)(5) on how to identify, respond to, and  
17       report a hate crime.

18       ...  
19       (17) Establish minimum educational and training standards for employment and  
20 continuing education for criminal justice officers concerning:

21       ...  
22       c. Pursuant to G.S. 17D-2(c)(5), identifying, responding to, and  
23       reporting a hate crime.

24       ...."

25       **SECTION 1.1.(l)** G.S. 17E-4(a) reads as rewritten:

26       "(a) The Commission shall have the following powers, duties, and responsibilities, which  
27 are enforceable through its rules and regulations, certification procedures, or the provisions of  
28 G.S. 17E-8 and G.S. 17E-9:

29       ...  
30       (2) Establish minimum educational and training standards that may be met in  
31 order to qualify for entry level employment as an officer in temporary or  
32 probationary status or in a permanent position. The standards for entry level  
33 employment of officers shall include all of the following:

34       ...  
35       d. Training under G.S. 17D-2(c)(5) on how to identify, respond to, and  
36       report a hate crime.

37       ...  
38       (11) Establish minimum standards for in-service training for justice officers.  
39 In-service training standards shall include all of the following:

40       ...  
41       j. Training under G.S. 17D-2(c)(5) on how to identify, respond to, and  
42       report a hate crime.

43       ...  
44       (13) Establish minimum educational and training standards for employment and  
45 continuing education for officers concerning:

46       ...  
47       c. Pursuant to G.S. 17D-2(c)(5), identifying, responding to, and  
48       reporting a hate crime.

49       ...."

50       **SECTION 1.1.(m)** G.S. 7A-413 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

1        "(e) The Conference shall develop and provide training to prosecutors on how to prosecute  
2 hate crimes. For purposes of this subsection, the term "hate crimes" means an offense punishable  
3 under G.S. 14-3(c), 14-401.14, or 14-34.11."

4           **SECTION 1.1.(n)** Subsections (a) through (e) of this section become effective  
5 December 1, 2025, and apply to offenses committed on or after that date. Subsection (f) of this  
6 section becomes effective January 1, 2026. The remainder of this section becomes effective July  
7 1, 2025.

## 9 **PROHIBIT DEFENSE BASED ON ACTUAL OR PERCEIVED PERSONALLY** 10 **IDENTIFYING CHARACTERISTIC**

11           **SECTION 1.2.(a)** Article 6 of Chapter 14 of the General Statutes is amended by  
12 adding a new section to read:

### 13 **"§ 14-18.3. Prohibited defense.**

14           (a) Prohibition. – Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the discovery of,  
15 perception of, or belief about another person's actual or perceived personally identifying  
16 characteristics, whether or not accurate, is not a defense to a prosecution under this Article and  
17 is not provocation negating malice as an element of murder.

18           (b) Construction. – Nothing in this section shall be construed as precluding the admission  
19 of evidence of a victim's or witness's conduct, behavior, or statements that is relevant and  
20 otherwise admissible.

21           (c) Definition. – For purposes of this section, the term "personally identifying  
22 characteristic" is as defined in G.S. 14-3."

23           **SECTION 1.2.(b)** Article 8 of Chapter 14 of the General Statutes is amended by  
24 adding a new section to read:

### 25 **"§ 14-34.12. Prohibited defense.**

26           (a) Prohibition. – Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the discovery of,  
27 perception of, or belief about another person's actual or perceived personally identifying  
28 characteristics, whether or not accurate, is not a defense to a prosecution under this Article.

29           (b) Construction. – Nothing in this section shall be construed as precluding the admission  
30 of evidence of a victim's or witness's conduct, behavior, or statements that is relevant and  
31 otherwise admissible.

32           (c) Definition. – For purposes of this section, the term "personally identifying  
33 characteristic" is as defined in G.S. 14-3."

34           **SECTION 1.2.(c)** Prosecutions for offenses committed before the effective date of  
35 this section are not abated or affected by this section, and the statutes that would be applicable  
36 but for this section remain applicable to those prosecutions.

37           **SECTION 1.2.(d)** This section becomes effective December 1, 2025, and applies to  
38 offenses committed on or after that date.

## 39 **PART II. DEFINITION OF DISCRIMINATION**

40           **SECTION 2.1.** Chapter 12 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new  
41 section to read:

### 42 **"§ 12-3.3. Definition of discrimination.**

43           (a) Discrimination is defined as any action, policy, practice, or omission that imposes  
44 harm or disadvantage on, excludes, or denies opportunities to, a group or member of a group,  
45 without an objectively verifiable and overriding necessity directly linked to a specific, lawful,  
46 and compelling objective. No justification shall be deemed valid unless it meets the following  
47 strict criteria:

48           (1) Objective necessity. – The action, policy, or practice must serve a clear,  
49 compelling, and demonstrable necessity, and there must be no reasonable,  
50

1 alternative means to achieve the objective that would impose less harm or  
 2 disparity.

3 (2) Evidence-based justification. – Any justification must be supportable by clear,  
 4 consistent, and empirically verifiable evidence, not assumptions, stereotypes,  
 5 or generalizations about distinct groups.

6 (3) Least harmful means. – If an action, policy, or standard disproportionately  
 7 affects a group or member of a group, it must be the least restrictive or harmful  
 8 method available to achieve the stated objective.

9 (b) The provisions of this section shall not be construed to diminish or infringe upon any  
 10 right protected under the First Amendment to the United States Constitution or the Constitution  
 11 of North Carolina."

12 **SECTION 2.2.** Chapter 41A of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new  
 13 section to read:

14 **"§ 41A-3.1. Definition of discrimination.**

15 For the purposes of this Chapter, "discrimination" is defined by G.S. 12-3.3."  
 16

17 **PART III. PROTECTION AGAINST HOUSING DISCRIMINATION**

18 **SECTION 3.1.(a)** G.S. 41A-3 reads as rewritten:

19 **"§ 41A-3. Definitions.**

20 For the purposes of this Chapter, the following definitions apply:The following definitions  
 21 apply in this Chapter:

22 (1) The "Commission" means the Commission. – The North Carolina Human  
 23 Relations Commission;Commission.

24 (1a) "Covered multifamily dwellings" means:Covered multifamily dwelling. –

- 25 a. A building, including all units and common use areas, in which there  
 26 are four or more units if the building has one or more elevators; or  
 27 b. Ground floor units and ground floor common use areas in a building  
 28 with four or more units.

29 (1b) "Familial status" means one Familial status. – One or more persons who have  
 30 not attained the age of 18 years being domiciled with:

- 31 a. A parent or another person having legal custody of the person or  
 32 persons; or  
 33 b. The designee of the parent or other person having custody, provided  
 34 the designee has the written permission of the parent or other person.

35 The protections against discrimination on the basis of familial status shall  
 36 apply to any person who is pregnant or is in the process of securing legal  
 37 custody of any person who has not attained the age of 18 years.

38 (2) "Family" includes Family. – Includes a single individual;individual.

39 (3) "Financial institution" means any Financial institution. – Any banking  
 40 corporation or trust company, savings and loan association, credit union,  
 41 insurance company, or related corporation, partnership, foundation, or other  
 42 institution engaged primarily in lending or investing funds;funds.

43 (3a) "Handicapping condition" means (i) a Handicapping condition. – (i) A  
 44 physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more of a  
 45 person's major life activities, (ii) a record of having such an impairment, or  
 46 (iii) being regarded as having such an impairment. Handicapping condition  
 47 does not include current, illegal use of or addiction to a controlled substance  
 48 as defined in 21 U.S.C. § 802, the Controlled Substances Act. The protections  
 49 against discrimination on the basis of handicapping condition shall apply to a  
 50 buyer or renter of a dwelling, a person residing in or intending to reside in the

- 1 dwelling after it is sold, rented, or made available, or any person associated  
 2 with the buyer or renter.
- 3 (4) ~~"Housing accommodation" means any Housing accommodation. – Any~~  
 4 improved or unimproved real property, or part thereof, which is used or  
 5 occupied, or is intended, arranged, or designed to be used or occupied, as the  
 6 home or residence of one or more ~~individuals;~~individuals.
- 7 (4a) Non-business purpose. – Any purpose that does not concern a prospective or  
 8 actual buyer's or tenant's actual ability to pay compensation in a real estate  
 9 transaction based upon the actual knowledge of the owner, lessor, agent, or  
 10 vendor.
- 11 (5) ~~"Person" means any Person. – Any individual, association, corporation,~~  
 12 political subdivision, partnership, labor union, legal representative, mutual  
 13 company, joint stock company, trust, trustee in bankruptcy, unincorporated  
 14 organization, or other legal or commercial entity, the State, or governmental  
 15 entity or ~~agency;~~agency.
- 16 (6) ~~"Real estate broker or salesman" means a Real estate broker or salesperson. –~~  
 17 Any person, whether licensed or not, who, for or with the expectation of  
 18 receiving a consideration, lists, sells, purchases, exchanges, rents, or leases  
 19 real property, or who negotiates or attempts to negotiate any of these activities,  
 20 or who holds himself out as engaged in these activities, or who negotiates or  
 21 attempts to negotiate a loan secured or to be secured by mortgage or other  
 22 encumbrance upon real property, or who is engaged in the business of listing  
 23 real property in a publication; or a person employed by or acting on behalf of  
 24 any of these persons;person.
- 25 (7) ~~"Real estate transaction" means the Real estate transaction. – The sale,~~  
 26 exchange, rental, or lease of real ~~property;~~property.
- 27 (8) ~~"Real property" means a Real property. – A building, structure, real estate,~~  
 28 land, tenement, leasehold, interest in real estate cooperatives, condominium,  
 29 and hereditament, corporeal and incorporeal, or any interest therein."

30 **SECTION 3.1.(b)** G.S. 41A-4 reads as rewritten:

31 **"§ 41A-4. Unlawful discriminatory housing practices.**

- 32 (a) It is ~~an~~ unlawful discriminatory housing practice for any person in a real estate  
 33 ~~transaction, because of the protected status of another person to:~~transaction to discriminate  
 34 against a person by doing any of the following based upon a non-business purpose:
- 35 (1) Refuse to engage in a real estate transaction;
- 36 (2) Discriminate against a person in the terms, conditions, or privileges of a real  
 37 estate transaction or in the furnishing of facilities or services in connection  
 38 therewith;
- 39 (2a), (2c) Repealed by Session Laws 2009-388, s. 1, effective October 1, 2009.
- 40 (3) Refuse to receive or fail to transmit a bona fide offer to engage in a real estate  
 41 transaction;
- 42 (4) Refuse to negotiate for a real estate transaction;
- 43 (5) Represent to a person that real property is not available for inspection, sale,  
 44 rental, or lease when in fact it is so available, or fail to bring a property listing  
 45 to his attention, or refuse to permit him to inspect real property;
- 46 (6) Make, print, circulate, post, or mail or cause to be so published a statement,  
 47 advertisement, or sign, or use a form or application for a real estate transaction,  
 48 or make a record or inquiry in connection with a prospective real estate  
 49 transaction, which indicates directly or indirectly, an intent to make a  
 50 limitation, specification, or discrimination with respect thereto;



- 1 (7) Offer, solicit, accept, use, or retain a listing of real property with the
- 2 understanding that any person may be discriminated against in a real estate
- 3 transaction or in the furnishing of facilities or services in connection
- 4 therewith; or
- 5 (8) Otherwise make unavailable or deny housing.

6 ...  
 7 (b1) It is an unlawful discriminatory housing practice for any person or other entity whose  
 8 business includes engaging in residential real estate related transactions to discriminate against  
 9 any person in making available such a transaction, or in the terms and conditions of such a  
 10 transaction, ~~because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, handicapping condition, or~~  
 11 ~~familial status.~~ based upon a non-business purpose. As used in this subsection, "residential real  
 12 estate related transaction" means:

- 13 (1) The making or purchasing of loans or providing financial assistance (i) for
- 14 purchasing, constructing, improving, repairing, or maintaining a dwelling, or
- 15 (ii) where the security is residential real estate; or
- 16 (2) The selling, brokering, or appraising of residential real estate.

17 The provisions of this subsection shall not prohibit any financial institution from using a loan  
 18 application which inquires into a person's financial and dependent obligations or from basing its  
 19 actions on the income or financial abilities of any person.

20 (c) It is an unlawful discriminatory housing practice for a person to induce or attempt to  
 21 induce another to enter into a real estate transaction from which such person may profit:

- 22 (1) By representing that a change has occurred, or may or will occur in the
- 23 composition of the residents of the block, neighborhood, or area in which the
- 24 real property is located with respect to race, color, religion, sex, national
- 25 origin, handicapping condition, or familial status of the owners or occupants;
- 26 or
- 27 (2) By representing that a change has resulted, or may or will result in the
- 28 lowering of property values, an increase in criminal or antisocial behavior, or
- 29 a decline in the quality of schools in the block, neighborhood, or area in which
- 30 the real property is located.

31 (d) It is an unlawful discriminatory housing practice to deny any person who is otherwise  
 32 qualified by State law access to or membership or participation in any real estate brokers'  
 33 organization, multiple listing service, or other service, organization, or facility relating to the  
 34 business of engaging in real estate transactions, or to discriminate in the terms or conditions of  
 35 such access, membership, or participation ~~because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin,~~  
 36 ~~handicapping condition, or familial status.~~ based upon a non-business purpose.

37 ...  
 38 (g) It is an unlawful discriminatory housing practice to discriminate in land-use decisions  
 39 or in the permitting of development based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin,  
 40 handicapping condition, familial status, or, except as otherwise provided by law, the fact that a  
 41 development or proposed development contains affordable housing units for families or  
 42 individuals with incomes below eighty percent (80%) of area median income. It is not a violation  
 43 of this Chapter if land-use decisions or permitting of development is based on considerations of  
 44 limiting high concentrations of affordable housing."

45 **SECTION 3.1.(c)** G.S. 41A-5(a) reads as rewritten:

46 **"§ 41A-5. Proof of violation.**

- 47 (a) It is a violation of this Chapter if:
- 48 (1) A person by ~~his~~ the person's act or failure to act intends to discriminate against
- 49 a person. A person intends to discriminate if, in committing an unlawful
- 50 discriminatory housing practice described in G.S. 41A-4 ~~he~~ the person was
- 51 motivated in full, or in any part at all, by ~~race, color, religion, sex, national~~

1 ~~origin, handicapping condition, or familial status, a non-business purpose.~~ An  
 2 intent to discriminate may be established by direct or circumstantial evidence.  
 3 (2) A person's act or failure to act has the effect, regardless of intent, of  
 4 discriminating, as set forth in G.S. 41A-4, against a person ~~of a particular race,~~  
 5 ~~color, religion, sex, national origin, handicapping condition, or familial status,~~  
 6 ~~based upon a non-business purpose.~~ However, it is not a violation of this  
 7 Chapter if a person whose action or inaction has an unintended discriminatory  
 8 effect, proves that his action or inaction was motivated and justified by  
 9 business necessity.

10 ...."

11  
 12 **PART IV. PROTECTION AGAINST EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION**

13 **SECTION 4.1.(a)** G.S. 143-422.2 reads as rewritten:

14 **"§ 143-422.2. Legislative declaration.**

15 (a) It is the public policy of this State to protect and safeguard the right and opportunity  
 16 of all persons to seek, obtain and hold employment without discrimination ~~account of race,~~  
 17 ~~religion, color, national origin, age, sex or handicap~~ by employers which regularly employ ~~15~~  
 18 ~~one or more employees.~~ For the purposes of this section, "discrimination" is defined by  
 19 G.S. 12-3.3.

20 (b) It is recognized that the practice of denying employment opportunity and  
 21 discriminating in the terms of employment foments domestic strife and unrest, deprives the State  
 22 of the fullest utilization of its capacities for advancement and development, and substantially and  
 23 adversely affects the interests of employees, employers, and the public in general.

24 (c) Repealed by Session Laws 2017-4, s. 1, effective March 30, 2017."

25 **SECTION 4.1.(b)** G.S. 126-16 reads as rewritten:

26 **"§ 126-16. Equal opportunity for employment and compensation by State departments and**  
 27 **agencies and local political subdivisions.**

28 All State agencies, departments, and institutions and all local political subdivisions of North  
 29 Carolina shall give equal opportunity for employment and ~~compensation, without regard to race,~~  
 30 ~~religion, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, or genetic information~~ compensation without  
 31 discrimination as defined by G.S. 12-3.3 to all persons otherwise qualified."

32 **SECTION 4.1.(c)** G.S. 126-34.02(b) reads as rewritten:

33 "(b) The following issues may be heard as contested cases after completion of the agency  
 34 grievance procedure and the Office of State Human Resources review:

35 (1) Discrimination or harassment. – An applicant for State employment, a State  
 36 employee, or former State employee may allege discrimination or harassment  
 37 ~~based on race, religion, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, genetic~~  
 38 ~~information, or political affiliation~~ if the employee believes that he or she has  
 39 been discriminated against in his or her application for employment or in the  
 40 terms and conditions of the employee's employment, or in the termination of  
 41 his or her employment.

42 (2) Retaliation. – An applicant for State employment, a State employee, or former  
 43 State employee may allege retaliation for protesting discrimination ~~based on~~  
 44 ~~race, religion, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, political affiliation,~~  
 45 ~~or genetic information~~ if the employee believes that he or she has been  
 46 retaliated against in his or her application for employment or in the terms and  
 47 conditions of the employee's employment, or in the termination of the  
 48 employee's employment.

49 (3) Just cause for dismissal, demotion, or suspension. – A career State employee  
 50 may allege that he or she was dismissed, demoted, or suspended for  
 51 disciplinary reasons without just cause. A dismissal, demotion, or suspension

1 which is not imposed for disciplinary reasons shall not be considered a  
 2 disciplinary action within the meaning of this section. However, in contested  
 3 cases conducted pursuant to this section, an employee may appeal an  
 4 involuntary nondisciplinary separation due to an employee's unavailability in  
 5 the same fashion as if it were a disciplinary action, but the agency shall only  
 6 have the burden to prove that the employee was unavailable. In cases of such  
 7 disciplinary action the employee shall, before the action is taken, be furnished  
 8 with a statement in writing setting forth the specific acts or omissions that are  
 9 the reasons for the disciplinary action and the employee's appeal rights. The  
 10 employee shall be permitted 15 days from the date the statement is delivered  
 11 to appeal under the agency grievance procedure. However, an employee may  
 12 be suspended without warning pending the giving of written reasons in order  
 13 to avoid undue disruption of work, to protect the safety of persons or property,  
 14 or for other serious reasons.

15 (4) Veteran's preference. – An applicant for State employment or a State  
 16 employee may allege that he or she was denied veteran's preference in  
 17 violation of the law.

18 (5) Failure to post or give priority consideration. – An applicant for State  
 19 employment or a State employee may allege that he or she was denied hiring  
 20 or promotion because a position was not posted in accordance with this  
 21 Chapter; or a career State employee may allege that he or she was denied a  
 22 promotion as a result of a failure to give priority consideration for promotion  
 23 as required by G.S. 126-7.1; or a career State employee may allege that he or  
 24 she was denied hiring as a result of the failure to give him or her a  
 25 reduction-in-force priority.

26 (6) Whistleblower. – A whistleblower grievance as provided for in this Chapter."

27 **SECTION 4.1.(d)** This section is effective when it becomes law.

28  
 29 **PART V. PROTECT AGAINST PUBLIC ACCOMMODATION DISCRIMINATION**

30 **SECTION 5.1.(a)** Chapter 143 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new  
 31 Article to read:

32 "Article 49B.

33 "Equal Access to Public Accommodations.

34 **"§ 143-422.10A. Short title; definitions.**

35 (a) This Article shall be known and may be cited as the "Equal Access to Public  
 36 Accommodations Act."

37 (b) The following definitions apply in this Article:

38 (1) Discrimination. – As defined by G.S. 12-3.3.

39 (2) Non-business purpose. – Any purpose that does not concern a prospective or  
 40 actual customer's or client's actual ability to pay compensation in exchange  
 41 for goods or services based on the actual knowledge of the proprietor or  
 42 vendor.

43 (3) Place of accommodation. – Has the same meaning as defined in  
 44 G.S. 168A-3(8) but shall exclude any private club or other establishment not,  
 45 in fact, open to the public.

46 **"§ 143-422.11A. Legislative declaration.**

47 It is the public policy of this State to protect and safeguard the right and opportunity of all  
 48 individuals within the State to enjoy fully and equally the goods, services, facilities, privileges,  
 49 advantages, and accommodations of places of public accommodation free of discrimination  
 50 based upon a non-business purpose.

51 **"§ 143-422.12A. Investigations; conciliations.**

1       (a) The Human Relations Commission in the Department of Administration shall have  
2 the authority to receive, investigate, and conciliate complaints of discrimination in public  
3 accommodations. Throughout this process, the Human Relations Commission shall use its good  
4 offices to effect an amicable resolution of the complaints of discrimination.

5       (b) If the Commission is unable to effect an amicable resolution of the charges of  
6 discrimination, the complainant and the Commission may proceed with an enforcement action  
7 using the procedures provided in G.S. 41A-7."

8               **SECTION 5.1.(b)** This section is effective when it becomes law.  
9

## 10 **PART VI. PROTECTION AGAINST CREDIT DISCRIMINATION**

11               **SECTION 6.1.(a)** Article 1 of Chapter 75 of the General Statutes is amended by  
12 adding a new section to read:

### 13 **"§ 75-45. Discrimination by lenders prohibited.**

14       (a) Discrimination Prohibited. – A person engaged in any form of lending money in this  
15 State, or to residents of this State, may discriminate in the extension of credit only on the basis  
16 of a prospective or actual borrower's or customer's ability to repay the extension of credit.

17       (b) Filing of Complaint With Human Relations Commission. – Any person who claims  
18 credit discrimination or who reasonably believes that he or she will be irrevocably injured by a  
19 violation of subsection (a) of this section may file a complaint with the North Carolina Human  
20 Relations Commission established under G.S. 7A-761. Upon receipt of a complaint, the  
21 Commission shall work with the relevant parties to develop an amicable resolution to the charge  
22 of discrimination. If the Commission is unable to effect an amicable resolution of the charges of  
23 discrimination, the complainant and the Commission may proceed with an enforcement action  
24 using the procedures provided in G.S. 41A-7. Filing of a complaint pursuant to this subsection  
25 shall not preclude the filing of an action pursuant to subsection (c) of this section. For the  
26 purposes of this section, "discrimination" is defined by G.S. 12-3.3.

27       (c) Violation an Unfair and Deceptive Trade Practice. – A violation of subsection (a) of  
28 this section shall constitute an unfair trade practice in violation of G.S. 75-1.1."

29               **SECTION 6.1.(b)** This section is effective when it becomes law.  
30

## 31 **PART VII. PROTECTION AGAINST INSURANCE DISCRIMINATION**

32               **SECTION 7.1.(a)** G.S. 58-3-25 reads as rewritten:

### 33 **"§ 58-3-25. Discriminatory practices prohibited.**

34       ...

35       (c) No insurer shall refuse to insure or refuse to continue to insure an individual; limit the  
36 amount, extent, or kind of coverage available to an individual; or charge an individual a different  
37 rate for the same coverage, because of ~~the race, color, or national or ethnic origin of that~~  
38 ~~individual~~ discrimination as defined by G.S. 12-3.3. This subsection supplements the provisions  
39 of G.S. 58-3-120, 58-33-80, 58-58-35, and 58-63-15(7)."

40               **SECTION 7.1.(b)** This section is effective when it becomes law.  
41

## 42 **PART VIII. PROTECTION AGAINST EDUCATION DISCRIMINATION**

43               **SECTION 8.1.(a)** G.S. 115C-47 is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

44       "(70) To Adopt a Policy on Nondiscrimination in Schools. – Each local board of  
45 education shall adopt a policy to establish that the local board of education  
46 and school personnel employed by the local board shall not engage in  
47 discrimination as defined by G.S. 12-3.3. The policy shall include that any  
48 person who claims to have been injured by an unlawful discriminatory  
49 practice or who reasonably believes that he or she will be irrevocably injured  
50 by an unlawful discriminatory practice may file a complaint with the North  
51 Carolina Human Relations Commission established under G.S. 7A-761. Upon

1 receipt of a complaint, the Commission shall work with the relevant parties to  
2 develop an amicable resolution to the charge of discrimination. If the  
3 Commission is unable to effect an amicable resolution of the charges of  
4 discrimination, the complainant and the Commission may proceed with an  
5 enforcement action using the procedures provided in G.S. 41A-7."

6 **SECTION 8.1.(b)** Part II of Article 9 of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes is  
7 amended by adding a new section to read:

8 **"§ 115C-112.10. Nondiscrimination requirement.**

9 A nonpublic school that accepts eligible students receiving scholarship grants shall not  
10 engage in discrimination as defined by G.S. 12-3.3. Any person who claims to have been injured  
11 by an unlawful discriminatory practice or who reasonably believes that he or she will be  
12 irrevocably injured by an unlawful discriminatory practice may file a complaint with the North  
13 Carolina Human Relations Commission (Commission) established under G.S. 7A-761. Upon  
14 receipt of a complaint, the Commission shall work with the relevant parties to develop an  
15 amicable resolution to the charge of discrimination. If the Commission is unable to effect an  
16 amicable resolution of the charge of discrimination, the complainant and the Commission may  
17 proceed with an enforcement action using the procedures provided by G.S. 41A-7."

18 **SECTION 8.1.(c)** G.S. 115C-218.45(e) reads as rewritten:

19 "(e) Except as otherwise provided by law or the mission of the school as set out in the  
20 charter, the school shall not limit admission to students on the basis of intellectual ability,  
21 measures of achievement or aptitude, athletic ability, or disability. A charter school shall not ~~limit~~  
22 ~~admission to students on the basis of race, creed, national origin, religion, or ancestry. subject~~  
23 any student to discrimination as defined by G.S. 12-3.3. A charter school whose mission is  
24 single-sex education may limit admission on the basis of sex. Within one year after the charter  
25 school begins operation, the charter school shall make efforts for the population of the school to  
26 reasonably reflect the racial and ethnic composition of the general population residing within the  
27 local school administrative unit in which the school is located or the racial and ethnic composition  
28 of the special population that the school seeks to serve residing within the local school  
29 administrative unit in which the school is located. The school shall be subject to any  
30 court-ordered desegregation plan in effect for the local school administrative unit."

31 **SECTION 8.1.(d)** G.S. 115C-218.55 reads as rewritten:

32 **"§ 115C-218.55. Nondiscrimination in charter schools.**

33 A charter school shall not ~~discriminate against any student on the basis of ethnicity, national~~  
34 ~~origin, gender, or disability.~~subject any student to discrimination as defined by G.S. 12-3.3. Any  
35 person who claims to have been injured by an unlawful discriminatory practice or who reasonably  
36 believes that he or she will be irrevocably injured by an unlawful discriminatory practice may  
37 file a complaint with the North Carolina Human Relations Commission established under  
38 G.S. 7A-761. Upon receipt of a complaint, the Commission shall work with the relevant parties  
39 to develop an amicable resolution to the charge of discrimination. If the Commission is unable  
40 to effect an amicable resolution of the charges of discrimination, the complainant and the  
41 Commission may proceed with an enforcement action using the procedures provided in  
42 G.S. 41A-7."

43 **SECTION 8.1.(e)** G.S. 115C-562.5(c1) reads as rewritten:

44 "(c1) A nonpublic school shall not engage in discrimination as defined by G.S. 12-3.3 or  
45 discriminate with respect to the categories listed in 42 U.S.C. § 2000d, as that statute read on  
46 January 1, 2014. Any person who claims to have been injured by an unlawful discriminatory  
47 practice or who reasonably believes that he or she will be irrevocably injured by an unlawful  
48 discriminatory practice may file a complaint with the North Carolina Human Relations  
49 Commission established under G.S. 7A-761. Upon receipt of a complaint, the Commission shall  
50 work with the relevant parties to develop an amicable resolution to the charge of discrimination.  
51 If the Commission is unable to effect an amicable resolution of the charges of discrimination, the

1 complainant and the Commission may proceed with an enforcement action using the procedures  
2 provided in G.S. 41A-7. For the purposes of this section, "discrimination" is defined by  
3 G.S. 12-3.3."

4 **SECTION 8.2.** G.S. 115D-77 reads as rewritten:

5 "**§ 115D-77. Nondiscrimination policy.**

6 It is the policy of the State Board of Community Colleges and of local boards of trustees of  
7 the State of North Carolina not to ~~discriminate among students on the basis of race, gender,~~  
8 ~~national origin, religion, age, or disability.~~ engage in discrimination as defined by G.S. 12-3.3.

9 The State Board and each board of trustees shall give equal opportunity for employment and  
10 compensation of personnel at community colleges without discrimination. Any person who  
11 claims to have been injured by an unlawful discriminatory practice or who reasonably believes  
12 that he or she will be irrevocably injured by an unlawful discriminatory practice may file a  
13 complaint with the North Carolina Human Relations Commission established under  
14 G.S. 7A-761. Upon receipt of a complaint, the Commission shall work with the relevant parties  
15 to develop an amicable resolution to the charge of discrimination. If the Commission is unable  
16 to effect an amicable resolution of the charges of discrimination, the complainant and the  
17 Commission may proceed with an enforcement action using the procedures provided in  
18 G.S. 41A-7. For the purposes of this section, "discrimination" is defined by G.S. 12-3.3."

19 **SECTION 8.3.** G.S. 116-11 is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

20 "(2b) The Board of Governors shall adopt a policy to provide that The University  
21 of North Carolina and its affiliates and personnel employed by The University  
22 of North Carolina and its affiliates shall not engage in any form of  
23 discrimination as defined by G.S. 12-3.3. The policy shall include that any  
24 person who claims to have been the subject of discrimination or who  
25 reasonably believes that he or she will be irrevocably injured by an unlawful  
26 discriminatory practice may file a complaint with the North Carolina Human  
27 Relations Commission established under G.S. 7A-761. Upon receipt of a  
28 complaint, the Commission shall work with the relevant parties to develop an  
29 amicable resolution to the charge of discrimination. If the Commission is  
30 unable to effect an amicable resolution of the charges of discrimination, the  
31 complainant and the Commission may proceed with an enforcement action  
32 using the procedures provided in G.S. 41A-7. For the purposes of this section,  
33 "discrimination" is defined by G.S. 12-3.3."

34 **SECTION 8.4.** This Part is effective when it becomes law.

## 35

### 36 **PART IX. PROTECTION AGAINST DISCRIMINATION IN JURY SERVICE**

37 **SECTION 9.1.(a)** G.S. 15A-1214 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

38 "(k) A citizen may not be excluded from jury service in this State on account of  
39 discrimination as defined by G.S. 12-3.3."

40 **SECTION 9.1.(b)** This section is effective when it becomes law.

### 41

### 42 **PART X. ALIGN STATE ANTIDISCRIMINATION LAWS**

43 **SECTION 10.1.(a)** The General Assembly finds that:

- 44 (1) North Carolina does not have a comprehensive antidiscrimination statute  
45 similar in scope to some of the ordinances that cities in this State have adopted.
- 46 (2) Instead, the State has a patchwork of protections against unlawful  
47 discrimination with a range of requirements and remedies that are not  
48 necessarily consistent.
- 49 (3) Therefore, this legislation amends various protection statutes that now exist in  
50 order to broaden and refine existing State antidiscrimination law to achieve  
51 equality for all.

- 1 (4) Aligning all State antidiscrimination laws into a single and consistent array of  
2 rights, obligations, and protections will best serve the people of this State.

3 **SECTION 10.1.(b)** The Legislative Research Commission (LRC) shall conduct a  
4 review of State antidiscrimination laws to develop legislative proposals that will further equality  
5 for all in North Carolina through comprehensive legislation. The LRC shall report its findings  
6 and recommendations to the 2027 General Assembly.

7 **SECTION 10.1.(c)** This section is effective when it becomes law.  
8

9 **PART XI. PROTECTION OF MINORS AND ADULTS WHO HAVE DISABILITIES**  
10 **FROM ATTEMPTS TO CHANGE SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER**  
11 **IDENTITY**

12 **SECTION 11.1.(a)** Chapter 90 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new  
13 Article to read:

14 "Article 10.

15 "Mental Health Protection Act.

16 **"§ 90-21.160. Short title.**

17 This Article shall be known as the "Mental Health Protection Act."

18 **"§ 90-21.161. Definitions.**

19 The following definitions apply in this Article:

20 (1) Adult under guardianship. – An adult who has been adjudicated incompetent,  
21 in accordance with Chapter 35A of the General Statutes, and who is incapable  
22 of providing consent for conversion therapy or a similar course of therapy or  
23 treatment.

24 (2) Conversion therapy. – As defined by the American Psychological Association  
25 in the most recent edition of the Dictionary of Psychology.

26 **"§ 90-21.162. Conversion therapy prohibited.**

27 (a) The following professionals shall not engage in conversion therapy with an individual  
28 under 18 years of age or an adult under guardianship:

29 (1) Licensed clinical social worker as defined in G.S. 90B-3.

30 (2) Licensed marriage and family therapist as defined in G.S. 90-270.47.

31 (3) Licensed clinical mental health counselor as defined in G.S. 90-330.

32 (4) Psychiatrist licensed in accordance with Article 1 of this Chapter.

33 (5) Licensed psychologist as defined in G.S. 90-270.136.

34 (b) Conversion therapy practiced by any professional listed in subsection (a) of this  
35 section shall be considered unprofessional conduct and shall subject each licensed professional  
36 who engages in the practice of conversion therapy to discipline under the licensed professional's  
37 respective licensing entity.

38 (c) The Department of Health and Human Services shall report to the appropriate  
39 licensing entity any professional found to be in violation of this section. The Department may  
40 adopt rules to set forth and implement reporting requirements of violations of this section.

41 **"§ 90-21.163. Prohibited State funding.**

42 No State funds, nor any funds belonging to a municipality, agency, or political subdivision  
43 of this State, shall be expended for the purpose of conducting conversion therapy, referring an  
44 individual for conversion therapy, health benefits coverage for conversion therapy, or a grant or  
45 contract with any entity that conducts conversion therapy or refers individuals for conversion  
46 therapy."

47 **SECTION 11.1.(b)** This section is effective when it becomes law and applies to acts  
48 on or after that date.  
49

50 **PART XII. ENSURE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROTECTIVE ORDERS ARE**  
51 **AVAILABLE FOR SAME-SEX COUPLES**





1 "Article 44.

2 "Right to Use Contraception.

3 **"§ 90-751.1. Title.**

4 This Article may be cited as the "Right to Use Contraception Act."

5 **"§ 90-751.2. Legislative declaration.**

6 The right to use contraception implicates the fundamental liberty to prevent pregnancy. It is  
7 the policy of the State of North Carolina that this State has no legitimate governmental interest  
8 in limiting the freedom to use contraception to prevent pregnancy."

9 **SECTION 14.1.(b)** This section is effective when it becomes law.

10  
11 **PART XV. RIGHT TO ACCESS ASSISTED REPRODUCTIVE TECHNOLOGY**

12 **SECTION 15.1.** Chapter 90 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new  
13 Article to read:

14 "Article 1Q.

15 "Assisted Reproductive Technology.

16 **"§ 90-21.180. Definitions.**

17 As used in this Article, the following terms have the following meanings:

18 (1) Assisted reproductive technology. – All treatments or procedures that include  
19 the handling of human oocytes or human embryos, including in vitro  
20 fertilization, gamete intrafallopian transfer, and zygote intrafallopian transfer.

21 (2) Health care provider. – Either of the following:

22 a. An individual who is licensed, certified, or otherwise authorized under  
23 this Chapter to provide health care services in the ordinary course of  
24 business or practice of a profession or in an approved education or  
25 training program.

26 b. A health care facility licensed under Chapter 131E of the General  
27 Statutes to provide health care services to patients.

28 The term "health care provider" includes (i) an agent or employee of a  
29 health care facility that is licensed, certified, or otherwise authorized to  
30 provide health care services, (ii) the officers and directors of a health care  
31 facility, and (iii) an agent or employee of a health care provider who is  
32 licensed, certified, or otherwise authorized to provide health care services.

33 (3) Health care service. – A health or medical procedure or service rendered by a  
34 health care provider that meets either of the following criteria:

35 a. Provides testing, diagnosis, or treatment of a health condition, illness,  
36 injury, or disease.

37 b. Dispenses drugs, medical devices, medical appliances, or medical  
38 goods for the treatment of a health condition, illness, injury, or disease.

39 **"§ 90-21.182. Right to access assisted reproductive technology.**

40 Neither the State nor any of its political subdivisions shall prohibit, unreasonably limit, or  
41 interfere with any of the following:

42 (1) The right of a patient to access assisted reproductive technology.

43 (2) The right of a health care provider to provide or assist with the provision of  
44 evidence-based information related to assisted reproductive technology.

45 (3) The right of a health care provider to perform or assist with the performance  
46 of assisted reproductive technology.

47 **"§ 90-21.184. Fertilized human egg or human embryo not a human being.**

48 A fertilized human egg or human embryo that exists in any form outside of the uterus of a  
49 human body shall not, under any circumstance, be considered an unborn fetus, an unborn child,  
50 a minor child, a natural person, or any other term that connotes a human being for any purpose  
51 under State law.

**"§ 90-21.186. Construction.**

Nothing in this Article shall be construed to prohibit the enforcement of health and safety laws related to the operation of health care facilities or the provision of health care services by health care providers."

**INCREASE FUNDING FOR MEDICAID MATERNAL SUPPORT SERVICES**

**SECTION 15.2.** Effective July 1, 2025, there is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Health Benefits, the sum of five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000) in recurring funds for the 2025-2026 fiscal year to be used to increase funding for Medicaid maternal support services, also known as the Baby Love Program. These funds shall provide a State match for nine hundred thirteen thousand dollars (\$913,000) in recurring federal funds for the 2025-2026 fiscal year, and those federal funds are appropriated to the Division of Health Benefits to be used for this same purpose.

**SECTION 15.3.** Except as otherwise provided, this Part is effective when it becomes law.

**PART XVI. ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE IN NORTH CAROLINA**

**SECTION 16.1.(a)** The General Assembly finds all of the following:

- (1) According to American Journal of Public Health studies published in 2014 and 2018 and affirmed by decades of research, Black, Indigenous, and Persons of Color (BIPOC) and individuals with low income are disproportionately exposed to environmental hazards and unsafe housing, facing higher levels of air and water pollution, mold, lead, and pests.
- (2) The cumulative impacts of environmental harms disproportionately and adversely impact the health of BIPOC and communities with low income, with climate change functioning as a threat multiplier. These disproportionate adverse impacts are exacerbated by lack of access to affordable energy, healthy food, green spaces, and other environmental benefits.
- (3) Since 1994, Executive Order 12898 has required federal agencies to make achieving environmental justice part of their mission by identifying and addressing disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and populations with low incomes in the United States.
- (4) In 2018, the Secretary of the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality established the Secretary's Environmental Justice and Advisory Board.
- (5) Executive Order 14008 issued in 2021 created the White House Environmental Justice Interagency Council within the Executive Office of the President and the White House Environmental Justice Advisory Council within the Environmental Protection Agency.
- (6) Following Executive Order 14008, the U.S. Department of the Interior enacted Secretary Order 3399 to establish the Climate Task Force to address current and historic environmental injustice. This order also made it the Department's mission to consider environmental justice when conducting National Environmental Protection Act analyses.
- (7) Executive Order 14096 issued in 2023 established a goal that forty percent (40%) of the overall benefits of certain federal climate, clean energy, affordable and sustainable housing, and other investments flow to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized by underinvestment and overburdened by pollution.

- 1 (8) Governor Cooper issued Executive Order 246 in 2022 and Executive Order  
 2 292 in 2023 directing various actions to advance environmental justice in  
 3 North Carolina, including requirements that agencies consider environmental  
 4 justice when taking actions related to climate change, resilience, and clean  
 5 energy, and identify an environmental justice lead to serve as the point person  
 6 for agency environmental justice efforts.
- 7 (9) State agencies receiving federal funds are also subject to the  
 8 antidiscrimination requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.
- 9 (10) In response to the documented inadequacy of state and federal environmental  
 10 and land use laws to protect vulnerable communities, increasing numbers of  
 11 states have adopted formal environmental justice laws and policies.
- 12 (11) The 1991 Principles of Environmental Justice adopted by The First National  
 13 People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit demand the right of all  
 14 individuals to participate as equal partners at every level of decision making,  
 15 including needs assessment, planning, implementation, enforcement, and  
 16 evaluation.
- 17 (12) Section 33 of Article I of the North Carolina Constitution establishes the  
 18 government as a vehicle for the common benefit, protection, and security of  
 19 the State's citizens and not for the particular emolument or advantage of any  
 20 single set of persons who are only a part of that community. This principle,  
 21 coupled with Section 1 of Article I of the North Carolina Constitution's  
 22 guarantee of equal rights to enjoying life, liberty, and enjoyment of the fruits  
 23 of their own labor, and the assurance of timely and equitable justice for all set  
 24 forth in Article I. Sections 18 and 19 of Article I of the North Carolina  
 25 Constitution encourage political officials to identify how particular  
 26 communities may be unequally burdened or receive unequal protection under  
 27 the law due to race, income, or geographic location.
- 28 (13) Lack of a clear environmental justice policy has resulted in a piecemeal  
 29 approach to understanding and addressing environmental justice in North  
 30 Carolina and creates a barrier to establishing clear definitions, metrics, and  
 31 strategies to ensure meaningful engagement and more equitable distribution  
 32 of environmental benefits and burdens.
- 33 (14) It is the State's responsibility to pursue environmental justice for its residents  
 34 and to ensure that its agencies do not contribute to unfair distribution of  
 35 environmental benefits to or environmental burdens on low-income,  
 36 limited-English proficient, and BIPOC communities.

37 **SECTION 16.1.(b)** Chapter 143 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new  
 38 Article to read:

39 "Article 21D.

40 "Environmental Justice.

41 **"§ 143-215.130. Purpose.**

42 The purpose of this Article is to identify, reduce, and eliminate environmental health  
 43 disparities to improve the health and well-being of all State residents.

44 **"§ 143-215.131. Definitions.**

45 The following definitions apply in this Article:

- 46 (1) Communities of color. – Communities in which the share of nonwhites and  
 47 Hispanic or Latino (of any race) residents is forty percent (40%) or higher or  
 48 at least ten percent (10%) higher than the residing county or State share.
- 49 (2) Community. – A group of individuals living in geographic proximity to one  
 50 another as a census block group or at the municipal level.

- 1           (3)   Disproportionate impact. – Disproportionately higher adverse health or  
2           environmental effects on communities of color, low-income communities,  
3           limited English language proficiency communities, or indigenous  
4           communities at levels that are statistically significant.
- 5           (4)   Environmental benefits. – The assets and services that enhance the capability  
6           of communities and individuals to function and flourish in society. Examples  
7           of environmental benefits include access to a healthy environment and clean  
8           natural resources, including air, water, land, green spaces, constructed  
9           playgrounds, and other outdoor recreational facilities and venues; affordable  
10           clean renewable energy sources; public transportation; fulfilling and dignified  
11           green jobs; healthy homes and buildings; health care; nutritious food;  
12           indigenous food and cultural resources; environmental enforcement; and  
13           training and funding disbursed or administered by governmental agencies.
- 14           (5)   Environmental burdens. – Any significant impact to clean air, water, and land,  
15           including any destruction, damage, or impairment of natural resources  
16           resulting from intentional or reasonably foreseeable causes. Examples of  
17           environmental burdens include climate change impacts; air and water  
18           pollution; improper sewage disposal; improper handling of solid wastes and  
19           other noxious substances; excessive noise; activities that limit access to green  
20           spaces, nutritious food, indigenous food or cultural resources, or constructed  
21           outdoor playgrounds and other recreational facilities and venues; inadequate  
22           remediation of pollution; reduction of groundwater levels; increased flooding  
23           or stormwater flows; home and building health hazards, including lead paint,  
24           lead plumbing, asbestos, and mold; and damage to inland waterways and  
25           waterbodies, wetlands, forests, green spaces, or constructed playgrounds or  
26           other outdoor recreational facilities and venues from private, industrial,  
27           commercial, and government operations or other activities that contaminate  
28           or alter the quality of the environment and pose a risk to public health.
- 29           (6)   Environmental justice. – The just treatment and meaningful involvement of  
30           all people, regardless of income, race, color, national origin, tribal affiliation,  
31           or English language proficiency, in State action that affect human health,  
32           well-being, quality of life, and the environment so that people:
- 33           a.   Are protected from disproportionate and adverse human health effects  
34           and environmental hazards, including those related to climate change,  
35           the cumulative impacts of environmental and other burdens, and the  
36           legacy of racism or other structural barriers.
- 37           b.   Have equitable access to environmental benefits in which to live, play,  
38           work, learn, grow, worship, and engage in cultural and subsistence  
39           practices.
- 40           c.   Have meaningful participation in decision-making processes,  
41           including the development, implementation, and enforcement of  
42           environmental laws, regulations, and policies.
- 43           (7)   Environmental justice communities. – Communities of color, low-income  
44           communities, indigenous communities, and limited English language  
45           proficiency communities that experience, or are at risk of, environmental  
46           burdens or lack access to environmental benefits.
- 47           (8)   Indigenous communities. – Communities where "American Indian Tribes," as  
48           defined by 01 NCAC 15 .0292, reside or where the share of American and  
49           Alaskan Native populations are five percent (5%) higher than the residing  
50           county or State share.

- 1           (9)    Limited English language proficiency communities. – Communities where at  
2           least one percent (1%) or more of households do not have a member 14 years  
3           or older who speaks English "very well" as defined by the U.S. Census  
4           Bureau.
- 5           (10)   Low-income communities. – Communities in which the share of population  
6           experiencing poverty is more than twenty percent (20%) or the share of  
7           households in poverty is at least five percent (5%) higher than the residing  
8           county or State share.
- 9           (11)   Meaningful participation. – The opportunity for all individuals to participate  
10          in energy, climate change, and environmental decision making. Examples  
11          include needs assessments, planning, implementation, permitting, compliance  
12          and enforcement, and evaluation. Meaningful participation also integrates  
13          diverse knowledge systems, histories, traditions, languages, and cultures of  
14          indigenous communities in decision-making processes and requires that  
15          communities are enabled and administratively assisted to participate fully  
16          through education and training. Finally, meaningful participation requires the  
17          State to operate in a transparent manner with regard to opportunities for  
18          community input and also encourages the development of environmental,  
19          energy, and climate change stewardship.
- 20          (12)   Program. – The Environmental Justice Program of the Department of  
21          Environmental Quality.
- 22          (13)   Rules Review Commission. – As defined in G.S. 143B-30.1.

23   **"§ 143-215.132. Environmental justice State policy.**

24           It is the policy of the State that no segment of the population of the State should, because of  
25           its racial, cultural, or economic makeup, bear a disproportionate share of environmental burdens  
26           or be denied an equitable share of environmental benefits. It is further the policy of the State to  
27           provide the opportunity for the meaningful participation of all individuals, with particular  
28           attention to environmental justice communities, in the development, implementation, or  
29           enforcement of any law, regulation, or policy.

30   **"§ 143-215.133. Implementation of State policy.**

31           (a) As used in this Article, "covered agencies" means the following State agencies: the  
32           Departments of Environmental Quality, Health and Human Services, Transportation, Commerce,  
33           Public Safety, Agriculture and Consumer Services, and Public Instruction and the Utilities  
34           Commission.

35           (b) The covered agencies shall consider cumulative environmental burdens and access to  
36           environmental benefits when making decisions about the environment, energy, climate, and  
37           public health projects; facilities and infrastructure; and associated funding.

38           (c) Each of the covered agencies shall create and adopt on or before July 1, 2027, a  
39           community engagement plan that describes how the agency will engage with environmental  
40           justice communities as it evaluates new and existing activities and programs. Each plan shall  
41           describe how the agency plans to provide meaningful participation in compliance with Title VI  
42           of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

43           (d) The covered agencies shall submit an annual summary beginning on January 15,  
44           2026, and annually thereafter, to the Environmental Justice Advisory Council, detailing all  
45           complaints alleging environmental justice issues or Title VI violations and any agency action  
46           taken to resolve the complaints. The Advisory Council shall provide any recommendations  
47           concerning those reports within 60 days after receipt of the complaint summaries. Agencies shall  
48           consider the recommendations of the Advisory Council pursuant to sub-subdivision (c)(1)e. of  
49           G.S. 143-215.135 and substantively respond in writing if an agency chooses not to implement  
50           any of the recommendations within 90 days after receipt of the recommendations.

1       (e)     The Program, in consultation with the Environmental Justice Advisory Council and  
2 the Interagency Environmental Justice Committee, shall review the definitions contained in  
3 G.S. 143-215.131 at least every five years and recommend revisions to the General Assembly to  
4 ensure the definition achieves the environmental justice State policy.

5       (f)     The Program, in consultation with the Interagency Environmental Justice Committee  
6 and the Environmental Justice Advisory Council, shall issue guidance on how the covered  
7 agencies shall determine which investments provide environmental benefits to environmental  
8 justice communities on or before September 15, 2025. A draft version of the guidance shall be  
9 released for a 40-day public comment period before being finalized.

10       (g)     Covered Agency Baseline Spending Reports. –

11           (1)    On or before February 15, 2026, the covered agencies shall, in accordance  
12 with the guidance document developed by the Program pursuant to subsection  
13 (f) of this section, review the past three years and generate baseline spending  
14 reports that include all of the following:

15               a.     Where investments were made, if any, and which geographic areas, at  
16 the municipal or census block group level, where practicable, received  
17 environmental benefits from those investments.

18               b.     A description and quantification of the environmental benefits as an  
19 outcome of the investment.

20           (2)    The covered agencies shall publicly post the baseline spending reports on their  
21 respective websites.

22       (h)     On or before July 1, 2026, it shall be the goal of the covered agencies to direct  
23 investments proportionately in environmental justice communities.

24           (1)    Beginning on January 15, 2028, and annually thereafter, the covered agencies  
25 shall either integrate the following information into existing annual spending  
26 reports or issue annual spending reports that include all of the following:

27               a.     Where investments were made and which geographic areas, at the  
28 municipal and census block group level, where practicable, received  
29 environmental benefits from those investments.

30               b.     The percentage of overall environmental benefits from those  
31 investments provided to environmental justice communities.

32           (2)    The covered agencies shall publicly post the annual spending reports on their  
33 respective websites.

34       (i)     Beginning on January 15, 2027, the covered agencies shall each issue and publicly  
35 post an annual report summarizing all actions taken to incorporate environmental justice into its  
36 policies or determinations, rulemaking, permit proceedings, or project review.

37       **§ 143-215.134. Rulemaking.**

38       (a)     On or before July 1, 2027, the Department of Environmental Quality, in consultation  
39 with the Environmental Justice Advisory Council and the Interagency Environmental Justice  
40 Committee, shall adopt rules to:

41           (1)    Define cumulative environmental burdens;

42           (2)    Implement consideration of cumulative environmental burdens within the  
43 Program; and

44           (3)    Inform how the public and the covered agencies implement the consideration  
45 of cumulative environmental burdens and use the environmental justice  
46 mapping tool developed by the Program.

47       (b)     On or before July 1, 2028, and as appropriate thereafter, the covered agencies, in  
48 consultation with the Environmental Justice Advisory Council, shall adopt or amend policies and  
49 procedures, plans, guidance, and rules, where applicable, to implement this Article.

50       (c)     The following requirements apply to rulemaking by covered agencies:

1           (1) Prior to drafting new rules required by this Article, agencies shall consult with  
2 the Environmental Justice Advisory Council to discuss the scope and  
3 proposed content of rules to be developed. Agencies shall also submit draft  
4 rulemaking concepts to the Advisory Council for review and comment. Any  
5 proposed rule shall be provided to the Advisory Council not less than 45 days  
6 prior to submitting the proposed rule or rules to the Rules Review Commission  
7 (RRC).

8           (2) The Advisory Council shall vote and record individual members' support or  
9 objection to any proposed rule before it is submitted to RRC and make  
10 documentation of that proceeding as part of the rulemaking record submitted  
11 to RRC.

12 **"§ 143-215.135. Environmental Justice Advisory Council and Interagency Environmental**  
13 **Justice Committee.**

14       (a) Advisory Council and Interagency Committee. –

15           (1) There is created:

16           a. The Environmental Justice Advisory Council (Advisory Council) to  
17 provide independent advice and recommendations to State agencies  
18 and the General Assembly on matters relating to environmental  
19 justice, including the integration of environmental justice principles  
20 into State programs, policies, regulations, legislation, and activities.

21           b. The Interagency Environmental Justice Committee (Interagency  
22 Committee) to guide and coordinate State agency implementation of  
23 the environmental justice State policy and provide recommendations  
24 to the General Assembly for amending the definitions and protections  
25 set forth in this Article.

26           (2) Appointments to the groups created in this subsection shall be made on or  
27 before December 15, 2025.

28           (3) Both the Advisory Council and the Interagency Committee shall consider and  
29 incorporate the Equitable Access & Just Transition to Clean Energy  
30 provisions of the North Carolina Clean Energy Plan in their work.

31       (b) Meetings. – The Advisory Council and the Interagency Committee shall each meet  
32 not more than eight times per year, with at least four meetings occurring jointly. Meetings may  
33 be held in person, remotely, or in a hybrid format to facilitate maximum participation and shall  
34 be recorded and publicly posted on the Secretary's website.

35       (c) Duties. –

36           (1) The Advisory Council shall have the following duties:

37           a. To advise State agencies on environmental justice issues and on how  
38 to incorporate environmental justice into agency procedures and  
39 decision making and evaluate the potential for environmental burdens  
40 or disproportionate impacts on environmental justice communities as  
41 a result of State actions and the potential for environmental benefits to  
42 environmental justice communities.

43           b. To advise State agencies in the development of community  
44 engagement plans.

45           c. To advise State agencies on the use of the environmental justice  
46 mapping tool established by the Program and on the enhancement of  
47 meaningful participation, reduction of environmental burdens, and  
48 equitable distribution of environmental benefits.

49           d. To review and provide feedback to the relevant State agency, pursuant  
50 to G.S. 143-215.134(c), on any proposed rules for implementing this  
51 Article.

- 1           e.       To receive and review annual State agency summaries of complaints  
2                   alleging environmental justice issues, including Title VI complaints,  
3                   and suggest options or alternatives to State agencies for the resolution  
4                   of systemic issues raised in or by the complaints.
- 5       (2)   The Interagency Committee shall have the following duties:
- 6           a.       To consult with the Program in the development of the guidance  
7                   document required by G.S. 143-215.133(f) on how to determine which  
8                   investments provide environmental benefits to environmental justice  
9                   communities.
- 10          b.       On or before July 1, 2025, to develop, in consultation with the Program  
11                   and the Environmental Justice Advisory Council, a set of core  
12                   principles to guide and coordinate the development of the State agency  
13                   community engagement plans required under G.S. 143-215.133(c).
- 14       (3)   The Advisory Council and the Interagency Committee shall jointly:
- 15           a.       Consider and recommend to the General Assembly, on or before  
16                   December 1, 2026, amendments to the terminology, thresholds, and  
17                   criteria of the definition of environmental justice communities,  
18                   including whether to include populations more likely to be at higher  
19                   risk for poor health outcomes in response to environmental burdens.
- 20           b.       Examine existing data and studies on environmental justice and  
21                   consult with State, federal, and local agencies and affected  
22                   communities regarding the impact of current statutes, regulations, and  
23                   policies on the achievement of environmental justice.
- 24       (d)   Membership. –
- 25           (1)   Advisory Council. – Each member of the Advisory Council shall be well  
26                   informed regarding environmental justice principles and committed to  
27                   achieving environmental justice in North Carolina and working  
28                   collaboratively with other members of the Advisory Council. To the greatest  
29                   extent practicable, Advisory Council members shall represent diversity in  
30                   race, ethnicity, age, gender, urban and rural areas, and different regions of the  
31                   State. The Advisory Council shall consist of the following 11 members, with  
32                   a goal to have more than fifty percent (50%) residing in environmental justice  
33                   communities:
- 34           a.       The head of the Program or designee.
- 35           b.       The following members appointed by the Governor:
- 36                   1.       One representative of municipal government.
- 37                   2.       One representative of a social justice organization.
- 38                   3.       One representative of mobile home park residents.
- 39                   4.       One representative of a statewide environmental organization.
- 40                   5.       One person representing an organization working on food  
41                   security issues.
- 42           c.       One person who resides in a census block group that is designated as  
43                   an environmental justice community by the House of Representatives  
44                   upon the recommendation of the Speaker of the House of  
45                   Representatives.
- 46           d.       One person who is a representative of immigrant communities in  
47                   North Carolina appointed by the Senate upon the recommendation of  
48                   the President Pro Tempore of the Senate.
- 49           e.       One representative of a State-recognized Native American Indian  
50                   tribe, recommended and appointed by the North Carolina Indian  
51                   Affairs Commission.



- 1           f.     The Executive Director of the North Carolina Housing Finance
- 2                 Agency or designee.
- 3           g.     The Executive Director of the North Carolina Land and Water Fund
- 4                 or designee.
- 5           (2)   Interagency Committee. – The Interagency Committee shall consist of the
- 6                 following nine members:
- 7                 a.     The Superintendent of Public Instruction or designee.
- 8                 b.     The Secretary of the Department of Environmental Quality or
- 9                 designee.
- 10                c.     The Secretary of Transportation or designee.
- 11                d.     The Director of the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency or
- 12                 designee.
- 13                e.     The Commissioner of the Department of Agriculture and Consumer
- 14                 Services or designee.
- 15                f.     The Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services or
- 16                 designee.
- 17                g.     The Director of the Division of Emergency Management of the
- 18                 Department of Public Safety or designee.
- 19                h.     The Secretary of the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources or
- 20                 designee.
- 21                i.     The Chair of the Utilities Commission or designee.
- 22           (3)   The Advisory Council and the Interagency Committee may each elect two
- 23                 cochairs.
- 24           (4)   After initial appointments, all appointed members of the Advisory Council
- 25                 shall serve six-year terms and serve until a successor is appointed. The initial
- 26                 terms shall be staggered so that one-third of the appointed members shall serve
- 27                 a two-year term, another third of the appointed members shall serve a
- 28                 four-year term, and the remaining members shall be appointed to a six-year
- 29                 term.
- 30           (5)   Vacancies of the Advisory Council shall be appointed in the same manner as
- 31                 original appointments.
- 32           (6)   The Advisory Council shall have the administrative, technical, and legal
- 33                 assistance of the Program."

34           **SECTION 16.1.(c) Reports.** – On or before December 15, 2027, the Program shall  
35 submit a report to the Joint Legislative Commission on Governmental Operations and the Fiscal  
36 Research Division of the General Assembly describing whether the baseline spending reports  
37 completed pursuant to G.S. 143-215.133(g), as enacted by subsection (b) of this section, indicate  
38 if any municipalities or portions of municipalities are routinely underserved with respect to  
39 environmental benefits, taking into consideration whether those areas receive, averaged across  
40 three years, a significantly lower percentage of environmental benefits from State investments as  
41 compared to other municipalities or portions of municipalities in the State. This report shall  
42 include a recommendation as to whether a statutory definition of "underserved community" and  
43 any other revisions to Article 21D of Chapter 143 of the General Statutes, as enacted by  
44 subsection (b) of this section, are necessary to best carry out the policies described in this section.

45           **SECTION 16.1.(d)** This section is effective when it becomes law.

46  
47 **PART XVII. DIVISION OF MOTOR VEHICLES TO OFFER APPLICATION, FORM,**  
48 **AND TEST IN NATIVE LANGUAGE OF APPLICANT**

49           **SECTION 17.1.(a)** G.S. 20-7 reads as rewritten:

50           "§ 20-7. Issuance and renewal of drivers licenses.

51           ...

1       (c2) Applicants with Limited English Proficiency. – Upon the request of the applicant, the  
2 Division shall provide a copy of any application, form, or test required for licensure under this  
3 section in the native language of the applicant.

4       ...."

5               **SECTION 17.1.(b)** This section becomes effective October 1, 2025.

6  
7 **PART XVIII. EFFECTIVE DATE**

8               **SECTION 18.1.** Except as otherwise specifically provided, this act is effective when  
9 it becomes law.