

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA**  
**SESSION 2025**

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**SENATE BILL 296**

Short Title: Buy American Steel. (Public)

Sponsors: Senators Craven, Overcash, and Johnson (Primary Sponsors).

Referred to: Rules and Operations of the Senate

March 18, 2025

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
2 AN ACT PROVIDING THAT THE STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS SHALL USE  
3 AMERICAN IRON AND STEEL IN PUBLIC WORKS PROJECTS.

4 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

5 **SECTION 1.** Article 8 of Chapter 143 of the General Statutes is amended by adding  
6 a new section to read:

7 **"§ 143-128.5. Required use of American-produced iron and steel products.**

8 (a) Definitions. – The following definitions apply in this section:

9 (1) Governmental entity. – As defined in G.S. 143-128.1B.

10 (2) Iron or steel product. – Any product made primarily of iron or steel, including,  
11 but not limited to, lined or unlined pipes and fittings; bars and rods; wire, wire  
12 ropes, and link chains; forgings; grating and drainage products; access covers,  
13 hatches, manhole covers, and other castings; hydrants; electric transmission  
14 and distribution poles; tanks; flanges; pipe clamps and restraints; valves;  
15 structural steel and other steel mill products; materials made primarily of iron  
16 and steel within precast concrete; and other construction materials made  
17 primarily of iron or steel.

18 (3) Manufacturing process. – The application of a process to alter the form or  
19 function of materials or elements of a product in a manner that adds value and  
20 transforms the materials or elements into a new finished product functionally  
21 different from a finished product produced merely from assembling materials  
22 or elements into a product without applying such a process.

23 (4) Produced in the United States. – With respect to iron and steel, all  
24 manufacturing processes, from initial melting through application of coatings,  
25 occurred in the United States, other than metallurgical processes to refine steel  
26 additives.

27 (5) Public works project. – An activity paid for with any State-appropriated funds  
28 or State funds administered by a governmental entity which consists of the  
29 construction, maintenance, repair, renovation, remodeling, or improvement of  
30 a building, road, street, sewer, storm drain, water system, site development,  
31 irrigation system, reclamation project, gas or electrical distribution system,  
32 gas or electrical substation, or other facility, project, or portion thereof owned  
33 in whole or in part by any governmental entity.

34 (b) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a governmental entity awarding a  
35 contract for a public works project or for the purchase of materials for a public works project  
36 shall include in the contract a provision requiring that any iron or steel product permanently



1 incorporated in the project shall be produced in the United States. This subsection does not apply  
2 to any of the following:

3 (1) A public works project for which the governmental entity administering the  
4 funds for the project or the purchase of materials for the project finds that any  
5 of the following apply:

6 a. Iron or steel products produced in the United States are not produced  
7 in sufficient quantities, reasonably available, or of satisfactory quality.

8 b. The use of iron or steel products produced in the United States will  
9 increase the total cost of the project by more than twenty percent  
10 (20%).

11 c. Complying with this subsection is inconsistent with the public interest.

12 (2) A public works project that makes minimal use of foreign iron or steel  
13 materials when both of the following apply:

14 a. The foreign iron or steel materials are incidental or ancillary to the  
15 primary product and are not separately identified in the project  
16 specifications.

17 b. The cost of the foreign iron or steel materials does not exceed  
18 one-tenth of one percent (0.1%) of the total contract cost or two  
19 thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500), whichever is greater. For  
20 purposes of this sub-subdivision, the cost of the foreign iron or steel  
21 materials is that shown to be the value of those materials as they are  
22 delivered to the project.

23 (3) Electrical components, equipment, systems, and appurtenances, including  
24 supports, covers, shielding, and other appurtenances related to an electrical  
25 system, necessary for operation or concealment, except transmission and  
26 distribution poles.

27 (c) This section shall be applied in a manner consistent with, and may not be construed  
28 to impair, the State's obligations under any international agreement.

29 (d) This section does not apply to contracts awarded by the Department of Transportation  
30 subject to the Buy America requirements of 23 C.F.R. § 635.410."

31 **SECTION 2.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2026, and applies to contracts  
32 awarded on or after that date.