

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA

SESSION 1995

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SENATE BILL 815

Short Title: Precinct Boundaries.

(Public)

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Sponsors: Senators Rand, Ballance, Cochrane, Conder, and Gulley.

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Referred to: Judiciary II/Election Laws

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April 25, 1995

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO AMEND THE LAW RELATING TO VOTING PRECINCTS.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

Section 1. G.S. 163-128 reads as rewritten:

**"§ 163-128. Election precincts and voting places established or altered.**

(a) Each county shall be divided into a convenient number of precincts for the purpose of voting, and there shall be at least one precinct encompassed within the territory of each township; provided, however, that upon voting. Upon a resolution adopted by the county board of elections and approved by the Secretary-Director of the State Board of Elections voters from a given precinct within a township may be temporarily transferred, for the purpose of voting, to a precinct in an adjacent township. an adjacent precinct. Any such transfers shall be for the period of time equal only to the term of office of the county board of elections making such transfer. When such a resolution has been adopted by the county board of elections to assign voters from more than one township precinct to the same precinct, then the county board of elections shall maintain separate registration and voting records, consistent with the procedure prescribed by the State Board of Elections, so as to properly identify the township precinct in which such voters reside. Except as provided in G.S. 163-132.2(a)(1), the The polling place for a precinct shall be located within the precinct precinct or on a lot or tract adjoining the precinct.

1 Except as provided by Article 12A of this Chapter, the county board of elections shall  
2 have power from time to time, by resolution, to establish, alter, discontinue, or create  
3 such new election precincts or voting places as it may deem expedient. Upon adoption of  
4 a resolution establishing, altering, discontinuing, or creating a precinct or voting place,  
5 the board shall give 45 days' notice thereof prior to the next primary or election. Notice  
6 shall be given by advertisement in a newspaper having general circulation in the county,  
7 by posting a copy of the resolution at the courthouse door, and by mailing a copy of the  
8 resolution to the chairman of every political party in the county. Notice may additionally  
9 be made on a radio or television station or both, but such notice shall be in addition to the  
10 newspaper and other required notice.

11 (b) Each county board of elections shall prepare a map of the county on which the  
12 precinct boundaries are drawn or described, shall revise the map when boundaries are  
13 changed, and shall keep a copy of the current map on file and posted for public inspection  
14 at the office of the Board of Elections, and shall file a copy with the State Board of  
15 Elections."

16 Sec. 2. Article 12A of Chapter 163 of the General Statutes reads as rewritten:

17 **"ARTICLE 12A.**

18 **"PRECINCT BOUNDARIES.**

19 **"§ 163-132.1. Participation in ~~Block Boundary Suggestion Program~~ 2000 Census**  
20 **Redistricting Data Program of the United States Bureau of the Census.**

21 (a) Purpose. – The State of North Carolina shall participate in the 2000 Census  
22 Redistricting Data Program, conducted pursuant to P.L. 94-171, of the United States  
23 Bureau of the Census, including Phase I (Block Boundary Suggestion Program) and  
24 Phase II (concerning the designation of precincts on 2000 Census maps or databases), so  
25 that the State will receive 2000 Census data by voting precinct and be able to revise  
26 districts at all levels without splitting precincts and in compliance with the United States  
27 and North Carolina Constitutions and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, as amended.

28 (b) Phase I (Block Boundary Suggestion Program). – The State of North Carolina  
29 shall participate in the Block Boundary Suggestion Program of the United States Bureau  
30 of the Census to the end so that the maps the Census Bureau will use in the 2000 Census  
31 will contain adequate features to permit reporting of Census data by precinct for use in  
32 the 2001 redistricting efforts. Not later than December 1, 1995, the The Legislative Services  
33 Office shall send preliminary maps produced by the Census Bureau in preparation for the  
34 2000 Census-Census, as soon as practical after the maps are available, to the county  
35 boards of elections to determine which of their precincts have boundaries that are not  
36 coterminous with a physical feature, a current township boundary, or a current municipal  
37 boundary, as shown on those preliminary 2000 Census maps. The Legislative Services  
38 Office shall:

- 39 (1) Assist county boards of elections in identifying the precincts with  
40 boundaries not shown on the preliminary Census maps and in  
41 identifying physical features the county boards may wish to have  
42 available for future precinct boundaries;

- 1 (2) Place those boundaries and features on maps deemed appropriate by the  
2 State Board;
- 3 (3) Request the U.S. Census Bureau to hold for census block identification  
4 in the 2000 U.S. Census all physical features the county boards have  
5 identified as current or potential precinct boundaries; and
- 6 (4) Request the U.S. Census Bureau to hold for census block identification  
7 in the 2000 U.S. Census all other physical features already on ~~U.S.-1990~~  
8 ~~Census Bureau~~ maps.

9 (c) Phase II. – The State shall participate in Phase II of the 2000 Census  
10 Redistricting Data Program so that, to the extent practical, the precinct boundaries of all  
11 North Carolina counties will appear on the 2000 Census maps or database. The State's  
12 effort shall be conducted as follows:

- 13 (1) By January 1, 1998, or as soon thereafter as they become available, the  
14 Legislative Services Office shall send to the county boards of elections  
15 the Census Bureau's official block maps, on paper or electronically, to  
16 be used in the 2000 Census.
- 17 (2) After receiving the maps, the county boards of elections shall designate  
18 their precinct lines along the block boundary lines on the maps. Where  
19 necessary, the county boards of elections shall alter precincts, including  
20 any precincts approved under the provisions of G.S. 163-132.1A, 163-  
21 132.2, or 163-132.3 or designated by local act, to conform to Census  
22 block boundaries as shown on the official block maps to be used for the  
23 2000 Census and to consist only of contiguous territory. The county  
24 boards of elections, at a time deemed necessary by the Executive  
25 Secretary-Director of the State Board of Elections, shall file with the  
26 Legislative Services Office the maps sent to them and marked by them  
27 pursuant to this subsection.
- 28 (3) After examining the returned maps, the Legislative Services Office shall  
29 submit to the Executive Secretary-Director of the State Board of  
30 Elections its opinion as to whether the county board of elections has  
31 complied with the provisions of this subsection, with notations as to  
32 where those boundaries do not comply with these standards.
- 33 (4) If the Executive Secretary-Director determines that the county board of  
34 elections has complied, he shall approve the precinct boundaries as filed  
35 and those precincts shall be the official precincts.
- 36 (5) If the Executive Secretary-Director determines that the county board of  
37 elections has not complied, he shall not approve those precinct  
38 boundaries but shall alter the precinct boundaries so that each precinct  
39 consists solely of contiguous territory and that each precinct's  
40 boundaries are coterminous with 2000 Census block boundaries nearest  
41 to the precinct boundaries shown by the county boards on the maps.  
42 These altered precincts shall then be the official precincts.

1           (6) Upon the adoption of a resolution by a county board of elections and  
2 instead of altering precinct lines as required by G.S. 163-132.1(c)(5),  
3 the Executive Secretary-Director may combine for Census reporting  
4 purposes only two or more adjacent precincts of the county into a  
5 Combined Reporting Unit, if the Executive Secretary-Director finds  
6 that:

7           a. The boundaries of the Combined Reporting Unit conform with  
8 the Census block boundaries as shown on the official block maps  
9 to be used in the 2000 Census;

10          b. The Combined Reporting Unit consists only of contiguous  
11 territory;

12          c. The precincts of which the Combined Reporting Unit consists  
13 were bounded as of January 1, 1996, by ridgelines, as certified on  
14 official county maps by the county manager of the relevant  
15 county, or if there is no county manager the chair of the board of  
16 commissioners, and the boundaries failed to comply with  
17 subdivision (2) of this subsection only because those ridgelines  
18 were unrecognized as Census block boundaries in the 2000  
19 official Census maps;

20          d. The Combined Reporting Unit does not contain a majority of the  
21 territory of more than one township; and

22          e. To alter those precinct boundaries would result in significant  
23 voter dislocation.

24 If the Executive Secretary-Director recognizes a Combined Reporting  
25 Unit for specific precincts, the official boundaries of those individual  
26 precincts forming the Combined Reporting Unit shall be those which  
27 the Legislative Services Office submitted to the Executive Secretary-  
28 Director under subdivision (3) of this subsection.

29           (7) The Executive Secretary-Director shall file the completed maps with the  
30 Census Bureau and request that the Census Bureau provide summaries  
31 of 2000 Census data by precinct and Combined Reporting Units.

32           (d) Freezing of Precincts. – Notwithstanding the provisions of G.S. 163-132.3,  
33 after the Executive Secretary-Director approves the precincts in accordance with  
34 subsection (c) of this section and before January 2, 2000, no county board of elections  
35 may establish, alter, discontinue, or create any precinct except by division of one precinct  
36 into two or more precincts using 2000 Census block boundaries for that division.  
37 Provided that, whenever an annexation ordinance adopted under Parts 1, 2, or 3 of Article  
38 4A of Chapter 160A of the General Statutes, or a local act of the General Assembly  
39 annexing property to a municipality, becomes effective during the period beginning with  
40 the date of the annexation as reported through the U.S. Census Bureau's 1998 Boundary  
41 and Annexation Survey and ending January 2, 2000, and any part of the boundary of the  
42 area being annexed which is actually contiguous to the city is also a precinct boundary  
43 for elections administered by the county board of elections then the annexed area is

1 automatically moved into the 'city precinct', provided that if the annexed area is adjacent  
2 to more than one city precinct, the board of elections shall place the area in any one or  
3 more of the adjacent city precincts. The county board of elections may delay the effective  
4 date of any change under this subsection to a date not later than January 1, 2002.

5 (e) Municipal and Township Boundaries. – Notwithstanding the provisions of  
6 subsections (c) and (d) of this section, the county boards of elections may designate  
7 precinct boundaries on municipal or township boundaries that are not designated on the  
8 2000 official Census block maps, according to directives promulgated by the Executive  
9 Secretary-Director of the State Board of Elections and adopted to insure that all precincts  
10 shall be included on the 2000 Census database.

11 (f) Additional Rules. – In addition to the directives promulgated by the Executive  
12 Secretary-Director of the State Board of Elections under G.S. 163-132.4, the Legislative  
13 Services Commission may promulgate rules to implement this section.

14 **"§ 163-132.1A. Precinct boundaries for certain counties.**

15 (a) The boundaries of precincts for the counties listed in subsection (b) of this  
16 section are those recorded in the Legislative Services Office's automated redistricting  
17 system as of May 1, 1991, except as changed in accordance with G.S. 163-132.3, and  
18 except in Caldwell County, the boundaries of Lenoir #3, North Catawba, Gamewell #1,  
19 and Gamewell #2 Precincts shall be as provided on the precinct map of the county  
20 adopted by the Caldwell County Board of Elections and in effect on January 1, 1992,  
21 unless changed in accordance with ~~G.S. 163-132.3.~~ G.S. 163-132.1 or G.S. 163-132.3,  
22 whichever occurs later.

23 (b) This section shall apply only to the following counties: Alamance, Buncombe,  
24 Burke, Cabarrus, Caldwell, Catawba, Chatham, Chowan, Cleveland, Craven,  
25 Cumberland, Davidson, Duplin, Durham, Edgecombe, Forsyth, Gaston, Granville,  
26 Guilford, Halifax, Harnett, Henderson, Iredell, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Mecklenburg,  
27 Nash, New Hanover, Onslow, Orange, Pender, Pitt, Randolph, Richmond, Robeson,  
28 Rockingham, Rowan, Sampson, Scotland, Surry, Union, Wake, Washington, Wayne,  
29 Wilkes, Wilson, and Yancey.

30 **"§ 163-132.2. Precinct boundaries for other counties.**

31 (a) The Legislative Services Office shall send as directed by the schedule  
32 contained in subsection (g) of this section the relevant copies of the United States Census  
33 Bureau's official census block maps of the 1990 United States Census to each county  
34 board of elections. The county board of elections shall:

35 (1) Alter, where necessary, precinct boundaries to be coterminous with  
36 those of:

37 a. Townships, as certified by the county manager, or the chairman  
38 of the board of county commissioners if there is not a county  
39 manager, on the official map of the county;

40 b. The census blocks established under the latest U.S. Census;

41 c. The following visible physical features, readily distinguishable  
42 upon the ground:

43 1. Roads or streets;

- 1                   2.     Water features or drainage features;
- 2                   3.     Ridgelines;
- 3                   4.     Ravines;
- 4                   5.     Jeep trails;
- 5                   6.     Rail features;
- 6                   7.     Above-ground power lines; or
- 7                   8.     Major footpaths
- 8                   as certified by the North Carolina Department of Transportation
- 9                   on its highway maps or the county manager of the relevant
- 10                  county or, if there is no county manager, the chair of the county
- 11                  board of commissioners, on official county maps.
- 12                  d.     Municipalities, as certified by the city clerk on the official map
- 13                  of the city; or
- 14                  e.     A combination of these boundaries;
- 15                  ~~Provided that if, as a result of the alteration, the polling place is no~~
- 16                  ~~longer in the precinct, it may continue to be the polling place as long as~~
- 17                  ~~the lot or tract on which the polling place is situated adjoins the~~
- 18                  ~~precinct;~~
- 19                  (1a)  Alter, where necessary, precinct boundaries so that each precinct is
- 20                  composed solely of contiguous territory;
- 21                  (2)   Mark all precinct boundaries on the maps sent by the Legislative
- 22                  Services Office, ~~Office~~ or on other maps or electronic databases
- 23                  approved by the Executive Secretary-Director, showing the precinct
- 24                  boundaries in effect as of the time of marking, but with any changes
- 25                  effective at a later time as provided by subsection (d) of this section; and
- 26                  (3)   File, at a time deemed necessary by the Executive Secretary-Director of
- 27                  the State Board of Elections, with the State Board and the Legislative
- 28                  Services Office the maps identifying the precinct boundaries. The
- 29                  Executive Secretary-Director may require a county board of elections to
- 30                  file a written description of the boundaries of any precinct or part
- 31                  thereof.
- 32                  (b)   The Executive Secretary-Director of the State Board of Elections and the
- 33                  Legislative Services Office shall examine the returned maps and their written
- 34                  descriptions. After its examination of the maps and their written descriptions, the
- 35                  Legislative Services Office shall submit to the Executive Secretary-Director of the State
- 36                  Board of Elections its opinion as to whether the county board of elections has complied
- 37                  with the provisions of subsection (a) of this section, with notations as to where those
- 38                  boundaries do not comply with these standards. If the Executive Secretary-Director of the
- 39                  State Board determines that the county board of elections has complied with the
- 40                  provisions of subsection (a) of this section, the Executive Secretary-Director of the State
- 41                  Board shall approve the maps and written descriptions as filed and these precincts shall
- 42                  be the official precincts.

1 (c) If the Executive Secretary-Director of the State Board determines that the  
2 county board of elections has not complied with the provisions of subsection (a) of this  
3 section, he shall not approve those precinct boundaries but shall alter the precinct  
4 boundaries so that each precinct consists solely of contiguous territory and that each  
5 precinct's boundaries are coterminous with those boundaries set forth in subsection (a)(1)  
6 of this section nearest to those existing precinct boundaries. These altered precincts shall  
7 then be the official precincts.

8 (d) The changes in precinct boundaries under subsections (b) and (c) of this  
9 section shall be made effective not later than January 1, 1997; unless the change would  
10 result in placing a precinct in more than one State House of Representatives, State Senate,  
11 or Congressional district, in which case it shall be made effective not later than January 1,  
12 2002.

13 (e), (f) Repealed by Session Laws 1991 (Reg. Sess., 1992), c. 927, s. 1.

14 (g) The Legislative Services Office shall send maps, under subsection (a) of this  
15 section, to the counties named below by the dates indicated:

16 (1) Maps to be sent not later than January 1, 1993, to the following  
17 counties: Alexander, Alleghany, Anson, Ashe, Avery, Beaufort, Bertie,  
18 Bladen, Brunswick, Camden, Carteret, Caswell, Currituck, Cherokee,  
19 Clay, Franklin, Gates, and Hoke;

20 (2) Maps to be sent not later than January 1, 1994, to the following  
21 counties: Columbus, Dare, Davie, Graham, Greene, Haywood, Hertford,  
22 Hyde, Jackson, Lee, Lincoln, Madison, Martin, Mitchell, Montgomery,  
23 Northampton, and Pasquotank; and

24 (3) Maps to be sent not later than January 1, 1995, to the following  
25 counties: Macon, McDowell, Moore, Pamlico, Perquimans, Person,  
26 Polk, Rutherford, Stanly, Stokes, Swain, Transylvania, Tyrrell, Vance,  
27 Warren, Watauga, and Yadkin.

28 (h) This section shall apply only to the following counties: Alexander, Alleghany,  
29 Anson, Ashe, Avery, Beaufort, Bertie, Bladen, Brunswick, Camden, Carteret, Caswell,  
30 Cherokee, Clay, Columbus, Currituck, Dare, Davie, Franklin, Gates, Graham, Greene,  
31 Haywood, Hertford, Hoke, Hyde, Jackson, Lee, Lincoln, Macon, Madison, Martin,  
32 McDowell, Mitchell, Montgomery, Moore, Northampton, Pamlico, Pasquotank,  
33 Perquimans, Person, Polk, Rutherford, Stanly, Stokes, Swain, Transylvania, Tyrrell,  
34 Vance, Warren, Watauga, and Yadkin.

35 (i) Any county board of elections whose precincts were not approved by the  
36 Executive Secretary-Director under the provisions of this section during the year by  
37 which maps were to be sent to the county under subsection (g) of this section shall submit  
38 precinct boundary changes that comply with subsection (a) of this section to the  
39 Legislative Services Office before January 1, 1996, according to directives promulgated  
40 by the Executive Secretary-Director.

41 **"§ 163-132.3. Alterations to approved precinct boundaries.**

42 (a) No county board of elections of a county listed in G.S. 163-132.1A(b), after  
43 January 1, 1990, and no county board of elections of a county listed in G.S. 163-132.2(h),

1 after its precinct boundaries are approved pursuant to G.S. 163-132.2, may change any  
2 precinct boundary unless the proposed new precinct consists solely of contiguous  
3 territory and its new boundaries are coterminous with those of:

- 4 (1) Townships, as certified by the county manager, or the chairman of the  
5 board of county commissioners if there is not a county manager, on the  
6 official map of the county;
- 7 (2) The census blocks established under the latest U.S. Census; Census or  
8 the boundaries contained on the latest preliminary U.S. Census maps,  
9 issued under P.L. 94-171, whichever occurs later;
- 10 (3) The following visible physical features, readily distinguishable upon the  
11 ground:  
12 a. Roads or streets;  
13 b. Water features or drainage features;  
14 c. Ridgelines;  
15 d. Ravines;  
16 e. Jeep trails;  
17 f. Rail features;  
18 g. Above-ground power lines; or  
19 h. Major footpaths  
20 as certified by the North Carolina Department of Transportation on its  
21 highway maps or the county manager of the relevant county or, if there  
22 is no county manager, the chair of the county board of commissioners,  
23 on official county maps.
- 24 (4) Municipalities, as certified by the city clerk on the official map of the  
25 city; or
- 26 (5) A combination of these boundaries.

27 The county boards of elections shall report precinct boundary changes by filing with  
28 the Legislative Services Office on current official census maps or maps certified by the  
29 North Carolina Department of Transportation or the county's planning department or on  
30 other maps or electronic databases approved by the Executive Secretary-Director the new  
31 boundaries of these precincts. The Executive Secretary-Director may require a county  
32 board of elections to file a written description of the boundaries of any precinct or part  
33 thereof. No newly created or altered precinct boundary is effective until approved by the  
34 Executive Secretary-Director of the State Board as being in compliance with this  
35 subsection.

36 (b) The Executive Secretary-Director of the State Board of Elections and the  
37 Legislative Services Office shall examine the maps of the proposed new or altered  
38 precincts and any required written descriptions. After its examination of the maps and  
39 their written descriptions, the Legislative Services Office shall submit to the Executive  
40 Secretary-Director of the State Board of Elections its opinion as to whether all of the  
41 proposed precinct boundaries are in compliance with subsection (a) of this section, with  
42 notations as to where those boundaries do not comply with these standards. If the  
43 Executive Secretary-Director of the State Board determines that all precinct boundaries



1 are in compliance with this section, the Executive Secretary-Director of the State Board  
2 shall approve the maps and written descriptions as filed and these precincts shall be the  
3 official precincts.

4 (c) If the Executive Secretary-Director of the State Board determines that the  
5 proposed precinct boundaries are not in compliance with subsection (a) of this section, he  
6 shall not approve those precinct boundaries. He shall notify the county board of elections  
7 of his disapproval specifying the reasons. The county board of elections may then  
8 resubmit new precinct maps and written descriptions to cure the reasons for their  
9 disapproval.

10 **"§ 163-132.4. Directives.**

11 The Executive Secretary-Director of the State Board of Elections may promulgate  
12 directives concerning its duties and those of the county boards of elections under this  
13 Article.

14 **"§ 163-132.5. Cooperation of State and local agencies.**

15 The State Budget Office, the Department of Transportation and county and municipal  
16 planning departments shall cooperate and assist the Legislative Services Office, the  
17 Executive Secretary-Director of the State Board of Elections and the county boards of  
18 elections in the implementation of this Article.

19 **"§ 163-132.5A: Repealed by Session Laws 1991 (Regular Session, 1992), c. 927, s. 1.**

20 **"§ 163-132.5B. Exemption from Administrative Procedure Act.**

21 The State Board of Elections is exempt from the provisions of Chapter 150B of the  
22 General Statutes while acting under the authority of this Article. Appeals from a final  
23 decision of the Executive Secretary-Director of the State Board of Elections under this  
24 Article shall be taken to the State Board of Elections within 30 days of that decision. The  
25 State Board shall approve, disapprove or modify the Executive Secretary's decision  
26 within 30 days of receipt of notice of appeal. Failure of the State Board to act within 30  
27 days of receipt of notice of appeal shall constitute a final decision approving that of the  
28 Executive Secretary. Appeals from a final decision of the State Board under this Article  
29 shall be taken to the Superior Court of Wake County.

30 **"§ 163-132.5C. Local acts and township lines.**

31 (a) Notwithstanding the provisions of any local act, a county board of elections  
32 need not have the approval of any other county board or commission to make precinct  
33 boundary changes required by this Article.

34 (b) ~~Notwithstanding G.S. 163-128, precinct~~ Precinct boundaries established, retained  
35 or changed under this Article, or changed to follow a district line where a precinct has  
36 been divided in a districting plan, may cross township lines.

37 **"§ 163-132.5D. Retention of precinct maps.**

38 The Executive Secretary-Director of the State Board of Elections shall retain the maps  
39 and written descriptions which he approves pursuant to G.S. 163-132.3.

40 **"§ 163-132.5E. Precinct maps and voter statistics filed with the Legislative Services  
41 Office.**

1 (a) No later than January 31 of each year, the chairman of each county board of  
2 elections shall file with the Legislative Services Office a map showing the county's  
3 precincts as of January 1 of that year.

4 (b) Not later than January 31 of each year, the chair of each county board of  
5 elections shall file with the Legislative Services Office a list of each precinct in the  
6 county as of January 1 of that year and the number of registered voters, in each precinct,  
7 by political party and race; and, no later than January 31 of each year beginning in 1996,  
8 with a numerical breakdown as to the race of registered voters of each political party.

9 (c) The Legislative Services Office shall develop and send by mail to each county  
10 board of elections by September 15 of each year a standard electronic data format that  
11 can be used in the following year by county boards of election as an alternative method of  
12 filing the list required by subsection (b) of this section. The standard electronic data  
13 format shall be for data provided in international standard ASCII file format on 9-track  
14 magnetic tape, 8-millimeter magnetic tape, 5 1/4 inch diskettes, or 3 1/2 inch diskettes.  
15 The standard electronic data format shall contain the name of the precinct, and for each  
16 precinct the total number of registered voters, the number of registered voters by party  
17 affiliation, the number of registered voters by race, and a numerical breakdown as to the  
18 race of registered voters in each political party.

19 **"§ 163-132.5F. U.S. Census data by precinct.**

20 The State shall request the U.S. Census Bureau for each decennial census to provide  
21 summaries of census data by precinct and shall participate in any U.S. Bureau of the  
22 Census' program to effectuate this provision.

23 **"§ 163-132.6: Repealed by Session Laws 1991 (Regular Session, 1992), c. 927, s. 1."**

24 Sec. 3. G.S. 163-132.3, effective on January 2, 2000, reads as rewritten:

25 **"§ 163-132.3. Alterations to approved precinct boundaries.**

26 (a) No county board of elections ~~of a county listed in G.S. 163-132.1A(b), after~~  
27 ~~January 1, 1990, and no county board of elections of a county listed in G.S. 163-132.2(h),~~  
28 ~~after its precinct boundaries are approved pursuant to G.S. 163-132.2,~~ may change any  
29 precinct boundary unless the proposed new precinct consists solely of contiguous  
30 territory and its new boundaries are coterminous with those of:

- 31 (1) Townships, as certified by the county manager, or the chairman of the  
32 board of county commissioners if there is not a county manager, on the  
33 official map of the county;
- 34 (2) The census blocks established under the latest U.S. Census or the  
35 boundaries contained on the latest preliminary U.S. Census Maps,  
36 issued under P.L. 94-171, whichever occurs later;
- 37 (3) The following visible physical features, readily distinguishable upon the  
38 ground:
  - 39 a. Roads or streets;
  - 40 b. Water features or drainage features;
  - 41 c. ~~Ridgelines;~~
  - 42 d. ~~Ravines;~~
  - 43 e. ~~Jeep trails;~~

- 1 f. Rail features; or  
2 g. Above-ground power ~~lines; or~~ lines  
3 ~~h. Major footpaths~~

4 as certified by the North Carolina Department of Transportation on its highway  
5 maps or the county manager of the relevant county or, if there is no  
6 county manager, the chair of the county board of commissioners, on  
7 official county maps.

8 (4) Municipalities, as certified by the city clerk on the official map of the  
9 city; or

10 (5) A combination of these boundaries.

11 The county boards of elections shall report precinct boundary changes by filing with  
12 the Legislative Services Office on current official census maps or maps certified by the  
13 North Carolina Department of Transportation or the county's planning department or on  
14 other maps or electronic databases approved by the Executive Secretary-Director, the  
15 new boundaries of these precincts. The Executive Secretary-Director may require a  
16 county board of elections to file a written description of the boundaries of any precinct or  
17 part thereof. No newly created or altered precinct boundary is effective until approved by  
18 the Executive Secretary-Director of the State Board as being in compliance with this  
19 subsection.

20 (b) The Executive Secretary-Director of the State Board of Elections and the  
21 Legislative Services Office shall examine the maps of the proposed new or altered  
22 precincts and any required written descriptions. After its examination of the maps and  
23 their written descriptions, the Legislative Services Office shall submit to the Executive  
24 Secretary-Director of the State Board of Elections its opinion as to whether all of the  
25 proposed precinct boundaries are in compliance with subsection (a) of this section, with  
26 notations as to where those boundaries do not comply with these standards. If the  
27 Executive Secretary-Director of the State Board determines that all precinct boundaries  
28 are in compliance with this section, the Executive Secretary-Director of the State Board  
29 shall approve the maps and written descriptions as filed and these precincts shall be the  
30 official precincts.

31 (c) If the Executive Secretary-Director of the State Board determines that the  
32 proposed precinct boundaries are not in compliance with subsection (a) of this section, he  
33 shall not approve those precinct boundaries. He shall notify the county board of elections  
34 of his disapproval specifying the reasons. The county board of elections may then  
35 resubmit new precinct maps and written descriptions to cure the reasons for their  
36 disapproval."

37 Sec. 4. G.S. 153A-19 reads as rewritten:

38 "**§ 153A-19. Establishing and naming townships.**

39 (a) A county may by resolution establish and abolish townships, change their  
40 boundaries, and prescribe their names, except that no such resolution may become  
41 effective during the period beginning January 1, ~~1988, 1998,~~ and ending January 2, ~~1990,~~  
42 2000, and any resolution providing that the boundaries of a township shall change  
43 automatically with changes in the boundaries of a city shall not be effective during that

1 period. The current boundaries of each township within a county shall at all times be  
2 drawn on a map, or set out in a written description, or shown by a combination of these  
3 techniques. This current delineation shall be available for public inspection in the office  
4 of the clerk.

5 (b) Any provision of a city charter or other local act which provides that the  
6 boundaries of a township shall change automatically upon a change in a city boundary  
7 shall not be effective during the period beginning January 1, ~~1988~~, 1998, and ending  
8 January 2, ~~1990~~, 2000.

9 (c) The county manager or, where there is no county manager, the chairman of the  
10 board of commissioners, shall report township boundaries and changes in those  
11 boundaries to the United States Bureau of the Census in the Boundary and Annexations  
12 Survey. In responding to the surveys, each county manager or, if there is no manager,  
13 chairman of the board of commissioners shall consult with the county board of elections  
14 and other appropriate local agencies as to the location of township boundaries, so that the  
15 Census Bureau's mapping of township boundaries does not disagree with any county  
16 voting precinct boundaries that may be based on township boundaries."

17 Sec. 5. Except as specifically otherwise provided in this act, this act is  
18 effective upon ratification.