

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2007

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HOUSE DRH30668-LR-167 (5/12)

Short Title: e-NC Connectivity/Tech Eco Dev Job Funds.

(Public)

Sponsors: Representative Tolson.

Referred to:

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT APPROPRIATING FUNDS TO THE E-NC AUTHORITY TO SUPPORT
CONNECTIVITY INITIATIVES AND TO ADVANCE TECHNOLOGY-BASED
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT JOBS THROUGHOUT THE STATE.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. Connectivity Incentive Grants. – There is appropriated from the General Fund to the e-NC Authority the sum of five million five hundred thousand dollars (\$5,500,000) in recurring funds for the 2008-2009 fiscal year to be used to bring communities up to the point where at least seventy to seventy-five percent (70-75%) of the households in all 100 counties will have the ability to access a high-speed Internet connection. These funds will allow the e-NC Authority to then work toward increasing high-speed access in all North Carolina counties up to 80 percent (80%), then 90 percent (90%), and eventually up to 100 percent (100%). These funds shall be granted through a formal request for proposals (RFP) process with a required match of at least one dollar twenty-five cents (\$1.25) from the applicant for every one dollar (\$1.00) committed by the e-NC Authority.

SECTION 2. Operations and Research. – There is appropriated from the General Fund to the e-NC Authority the additional sum of three hundred thousand dollars (\$300,000) in recurring funds for the 2008-2009 fiscal year to continue its operational, advocacy, and research functions. These funds will allow the e-NC Authority to continue its efforts Statewide, serving as the primary advocate in North Carolina for universal high-speed Internet access and the economic growth potential possible through expanded broadband.

SECTION 3. Business & Technology Telecenter Grants. – There is appropriated from the General Fund to the e-NC Authority the sum of three hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$350,000) in recurring funds for the 2008-2009 fiscal year to continue support of its seven current sites. This funding will allow each Telecenter to

1 apply for up to fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) per year in operating support, which
2 would continue to fund a director or technology officer in each region. All grant awards
3 would be awarded on an RFP basis. This operating support may be needed for
4 approximately three more years. These current program sites are as follows:

- 5 (1) Blue Ridge Business Development Center in Sparta, Alleghany
6 County.
- 7 (2) New Ventures Business Development, Inc., in Wadesboro, Anson
8 County.
- 9 (3) Tri-County Community College Telecenter in Murphy, Cherokee
10 County.
- 11 (4) Northeast Technology & Business Center in Williamston, Martin
12 County.
- 13 (5) The Roanoke Center in Rich Square, Northampton County.
- 14 (6) Rockingham County Business & Technology Center in Wentworth,
15 Rockingham County.
- 16 (7) Foothills Connect Business & Technology Center in Rutherfordton,
17 Rutherford County.

18 **SECTION 4.** Competitive, Innovative Technology-Based Economic
19 Development (CITED) Grants. – There is appropriated from the General Fund to the
20 e-NC Authority the sum of three hundred thousand dollars (\$300,000) in recurring
21 funds for the 2008-2009 fiscal year to assist communities, citizens, and businesses
22 across North Carolina to have the capacity to adopt and adapt Web-based applications
23 to enhance quality of life and economic prospects. Through CITED, the e-NC Authority
24 shall make seed and matching funds available to focus the powers of innovation through
25 technology toward sustainable economic and community development. These funds
26 shall be used to prototype and test the programs, products, and processes that can
27 enhance government, education, and business operations.

28 **SECTION 5.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2008.