

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA**  
**SESSION 2007**

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**HOUSE BILL 2557**

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

(Public)

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Sponsors: Representatives Tolson; T. Harrell and Wray.

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Referred to: Appropriations.

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May 26, 2008

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1 AN ACT APPROPRIATING FUNDS TO THE E-NC AUTHORITY TO SUPPORT  
2 CONNECTIVITY INITIATIVES AND TO ADVANCE TECHNOLOGY-BASED  
3 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT JOBS THROUGHOUT THE STATE.  
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5 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

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

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

24 **SECTION 3.** Business & Technology Telecenter Grants. – There is  
25 appropriated from the General Fund to the e-NC Authority the sum of three hundred  
26 fifty thousand dollars (\$350,000) in recurring funds for the 2008-2009 fiscal year to  
27 continue support of its seven current sites. This funding will allow each Telecenter to  
28 apply for up to fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) per year in operating support, which  
29 would continue to fund a director or technology officer in each region. All grant awards

1 would be awarded on an RFP basis. This operating support may be needed for  
2 approximately three more years. These current program sites are as follows:

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

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

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