

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2007

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HOUSE BILL 603

Short Title: Rail Service Study Commission. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Rapp, Pate, Dickson (Primary Sponsors); Faison, Gulley, and Luebke.

Referred to: Transportation.

March 13, 2007

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO CREATE THE JOINT LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION ON EXPANDING RAIL SERVICE.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1.(a) Commission Established. – There is established in the General Assembly a Joint Legislative Commission on Expanding Rail Service. The Commission shall be composed of 16 members as follows:

- (1) Eight members of the House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives.
- (2) Eight members of the Senate appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate.

SECTION 1.(b) Duties of Commission. – The Commission shall study the following matters related to expanding rail service in North Carolina:

- (1) The cost and benefits of expanding and upgrading rail service in the State, including the effect the expanded service would have on economic development.
- (2) The feasibility, cost, and benefits of establishing commuter rail service in the State to transport workers to cities from outlying areas, including the effect the commuter service would have on increasing the economic opportunities of those who live in the outlying areas.
- (3) The cost and benefits of expanding passenger rail service to the western and eastern areas of the State, including the effect the expanded service would have on tourism.
- (4) Ways to preserve unused or abandoned rail corridors for future rail needs.
- (5) Tax incentives for rail improvements to spur economic growth through further expansion and improvements of railroads, especially short lines.

1 Any vacancy on the Commission shall be filled by the appointing authority.
2 Cochairs of the Commission shall be designated by the Speaker of the House of
3 Representatives and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate from among their
4 respective appointees. The Commission shall meet upon the call of the cochairs. A
5 quorum of the Commission shall be nine members.

6 **SECTION 1.(c)** Expenses of Members. – Members of the Commission shall
7 receive per diem, subsistence, and travel allowances in accordance with G.S. 120-3.1,
8 138-5, or 138-6, as appropriate.

9 **SECTION 1.(d)** Staff. – Adequate staff shall be provided to the Commission
10 by the Legislative Services Office.

11 **SECTION 1.(e)** Consultants. – The Commission may contract for
12 professional, clerical, or consultant services as provided by G.S. 120-32.02.

13 **SECTION 1.(f)** Cooperation. – The Commission may call upon any
14 department, agency, institution, or officer of the State or any political subdivision
15 thereof for facilities, data, or other assistance.

16 **SECTION 1.(g)** Meetings During Legislative Session. – The Commission
17 may meet during a regular or extra session of the General Assembly, subject to approval
18 of the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President Pro Tempore of the
19 Senate.

20 **SECTION 1.(h)** Meeting Location. – The Commission shall meet at various
21 locations around the State in order to promote greater public participation in its
22 deliberations. The Legislative Services Commission shall grant adequate meeting space
23 to the Commission in the State Legislative Building or the Legislative Office Building.

24 **SECTION 1.(i)** Report. – The Commission shall make a final report of its
25 findings and recommendations to the 2009 General Assembly. Upon the filing of its
26 final report, the Commission shall terminate.

27 **SECTION 1.(j)** Appropriation. – Of the funds appropriated to the General
28 Assembly, the Legislative Services Commission shall allocate funds for the expenses of
29 the Commission.

30 **SECTION 2.** This act is effective when it becomes law.