

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2007

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HOUSE BILL 757

Short Title: Study Rural High Speed Internet Access/Funds. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Faison; and Wray.

Referred to: Appropriations.

March 15, 2007

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT CREATING THE LEGISLATIVE STUDY COMMISSION ON RURAL
3 INTERNET ACCESS AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR THAT PURPOSE.

4 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

5 **SECTION 1.(a)** There is created the Legislative Study Commission on
6 Rural Internet Access ("Commission"). The Commission shall consist of 10 voting
7 members appointed as follows:

8 (1) Five members appointed by the Speaker of the House of
9 Representatives, to include:

10 a. Three members of the House of Representatives.

11 b. At least one person from the high-speed Internet industry or the
12 field of information technology.

13 (2) Five members appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate,
14 to include:

15 a. Three members of the Senate.

16 b. At least one person from the high-speed Internet industry or the
17 field of information technology.

18 **SECTION 1.(b)** The Commission shall include nonvoting, ex officio
19 members as follows:

20 (1) The State Chief Information Officer, or the officer's designee.

21 (2) The Secretary of Commerce, or the officer's designee.

22 **SECTION 1.(c)** The Commission shall:

23 (1) Review and assess current efforts to provide citizens living in the rural
24 areas of the State with access to technological advancements in
25 telecommunications and information networks.

26 (2) Review the affordability and availability of high-speed Internet access
27 in rural areas of the State.

28 (3) Examine how State funds are being used currently to help bring
29 Internet access to rural areas of the State and determine whether there

1 are more cost-effective ways for the State to assist efforts to bring
2 high-speed Internet access to those areas.

3 (4) Study any other matter the Commission deems relevant.

4 (5) Make an interim report to the General Assembly by the convening of
5 the 2008 Regular Session.

6 (6) Make a final report to the 2009 General Assembly that includes
7 findings, recommendations, and legislative proposals relating to rural
8 Internet access in the State.

9 **SECTION 1.(d)** The Speaker of the House of Representatives and the
10 President Pro Tempore of the Senate shall each appoint a cochair for the Commission.
11 The Commission may contract for consultant services as provided by G.S. 120-32.02.
12 Upon approval of the Legislative Services Commission, the Legislative Services Officer
13 shall assign professional and clerical staff to assist in the work of the Commission.
14 Clerical staff shall be furnished to the Commission through the offices of the House of
15 Representatives and the Senate Directors of Legislative Assistants. The Commission
16 may meet in the Legislative Building or the Legislative Office Building upon the
17 approval of the Legislative Services Commission. Members of the Commission shall
18 receive per diem, subsistence, and travel allowances at the rate established in
19 G.S. 120-3.1. The appointing authority shall fill vacancies. The Commission, while in
20 the discharge of its official duties, may exercise all the powers provided under the
21 provisions of G.S. 120-19 through G.S. 120-19.4, including the power to request all
22 officers, agents, agencies, and departments of the State to provide any information, data,
23 or documents within their possession, ascertainable from their records, or otherwise
24 available to them and the power to subpoena witnesses.

25 **SECTION 1.(e)** The Commission shall terminate upon filing its final report.

26 **SECTION 2.** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the General
27 Assembly the sum of one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) for the 2007-2008 fiscal
28 year and the sum of one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) for the 2008-2009 fiscal
29 year to fund the work of the Legislative Study Commission on Rural Internet Access
30 created by this act.

31 **SECTION 3.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2007.