

NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

LEGISLATIVE FISCAL NOTE

BILL NUMBER: HB 952

SHORT TITLE: North Carolina Bridge Authority

SPONSOR(S): Committee Substitute

FISCAL IMPACT:	Expenditures:	Increase ()	Decrease ()
	Revenues:	Increase ()	Decrease ()
	No Impact (X)		
	No Estimate Available ()		

FUND AFFECTED: General Fund () Highway Fund () Local Govt. ()
 Other Funds ()

BILL SUMMARY: The bill establishes the North Carolina Bridge Authority, which would construct, maintain, and repair a bridge of more than two miles in length going from the mainland to a peninsula from which land egress is through property of the United States. These criteria apply to a bridge that is proposed to span the Currituck Sound, reaching the Outer Banks peninsula near Corolla. The bill gives the Authority the power to set and collect tolls for passage over the bridge, up to a maximum of \$10 per crossing, or \$500 per year.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon ratification.

FISCAL IMPACT: The bill does not provide any General Fund, Highway Fund, or Highway Trust Fund resources to the Authority. Construction of the Corolla bridge is scheduled to begin in FY 2000 as part of the Highway Trust Fund Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP), but construction of the bridge at that time is subject to the approval of general obligation bond funding. The bill does not give the Authority the power to issue bonds, and so does not alter this situation.

While the bill does provide for the creation of a 7-member board for the authority, and for the payment of per diem to board members, no funds are made available by the bill to pay these expenses from any source. Absent funding, it is assumed that the board will not meet.

The bill also indicates that any tolls collected for passage across the bridge would be credited to the Highway Trust Fund, but this is not a change from current law (G.S. 136-88.2).

TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS: The bill does not make changes to G.S. 136-88.2, which currently gives the Department of Transportation the power to charge a toll on the bridge and set the maximum toll. Unless G.S. 136-88.2 is amended to remove this power from the Department of Transportation, it is not clear which entity has the power to set and collect tolls.

FISCAL RESEARCH DIVISION

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