

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2001**

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**SENATE BILL 9
Second Edition Engrossed 2/21/01
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Short Title: Interstate High-Speed Rail Commission. (Public)

Sponsors: Senators Gulley; Clodfelter, Hartsell, Hoyle, Metcalf, and Plyler.

Referred to: Transportation.

January 25, 2001

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT TO APPOINT MEMBERS TO THE VIRGINIA-NORTH CAROLINA
3 INTERSTATE HIGH-SPEED RAIL COMMISSION.

4 Whereas, levels of congestion on interstate highways and at major airports
5 along the east coast of the United States are rapidly rising, and in some locations have
6 reached virtual gridlock for hours each day; and

7 Whereas, it is therefore necessary to develop and use alternative modes of
8 transportation for the movement of goods and passengers long distances along the
9 east-coast corridor; and

10 Whereas, preliminary engineering studies have documented that the creation
11 of high-speed passenger rail service between points in Virginia and points in North
12 Carolina could provide travelers along the corridor with an attractive alternative to
13 highway travel, thus reducing highway congestion; and

14 Whereas, establishment of high-speed passenger rail service between Virginia
15 and North Carolina offers the additional possibility of connection through the District of
16 Columbia to origins and destinations as far north as New England; and

17 Whereas, establishment of high-speed passenger rail service between Virginia
18 and North Carolina offers the additional possibility of connections to destinations in the
19 South, including Florida, Greenville-Spartanburg, South Carolina, and Atlanta, Georgia;
20 and

21 Whereas, it is useful and prudent to have a panel of legislators from both
22 Virginia and North Carolina established in order to explore the benefits, costs, and
23 required legislative actions associated with establishing high-speed passenger rail
24 service; Now, therefore,

25 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

1 **SECTION 1.** Upon the Virginia General Assembly's concurring action, the
2 Virginia-North Carolina Interstate High-Speed Rail Commission is established. The
3 North Carolina component shall consist of six members to be appointed as follows:

- 4 (1) Three members of the House of Representatives to be appointed by the
5 Speaker of the House of Representatives; and
- 6 (2) Three members of the Senate to be appointed by the President Pro
7 Tempore of the Senate.

8 **SECTION 2.** In conducting its study, the Commission shall hold meetings,
9 tours of inspection, and public hearings as appropriate to determine the desirability and
10 feasibility of establishing high-speed passenger rail service between Virginia and North
11 Carolina. If it appears to the Commission that establishment of such service is desirable
12 and feasible, the Commission shall consider and recommend to the Governor and
13 General Assembly those legislative actions necessary to do so, including the
14 identification of the necessary levels of funding and the sources of those funds.

15 **SECTION 3.** Upon approval of the Legislative Services Commission, the
16 Legislative Services Officer shall assign professional and clerical staff to assist in the
17 work of the Commission. Technical support shall be provided by the Rail Division of
18 the Department of Transportation. Clerical staff shall be furnished to the Commission
19 through the offices of the House of Representatives and Senate Supervisors of Clerks.
20 The Commission may meet in the Legislative Building or the Legislative Office
21 Building upon the approval of the Legislative Services Commission. The North
22 Carolina members of the Commission, while in the discharge of official duties, may
23 exercise all the powers provided under the provisions of G.S. 120-19 through G.S.
24 120-19.4, including the power to request all officers, agents, agencies, and departments
25 of the State to provide any information, data, or documents within their possession,
26 ascertainable from their records, or otherwise available to them, and the power to
27 subpoena witnesses. North Carolina members of the Commission shall receive per
28 diem, subsistence, and travel allowances as follows:

- 29 (1) Commission members who are members of the General Assembly at
30 the rate established in G.S. 120-3.1;
- 31 (2) Commission members who are officials or employees of the State or of
32 local government agencies at the rate established in G.S. 138-6; and
- 33 (3) All other Commission members at the rate established in G.S. 138-5.

34 **SECTION 4.** The Commission shall report its findings and any
35 recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly upon the convening of the
36 2002 Regular Session of the 2001 General Assembly.

37 **SECTION 5.** From funds appropriated to the General Assembly, the
38 Legislative Services Commission shall allocate funds for the expenses of the Interstate
39 High-Speed Rail Commission.

40 **SECTION 6.** This act is effective when it becomes law.