

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2007

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HOUSE BILL 626*

Short Title: Disability History & Awareness Month. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Insko; Alexander, Brown, Faison, Glazier, Gulley, Harrison, Luebke, Setzer, Wainwright, Weiss, and Wray.

Referred to: Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House.

March 14, 2007

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1
2 AN ACT DESIGNATING THE MONTH OF OCTOBER AS DISABILITY HISTORY
3 AND AWARENESS MONTH AND REQUIRING LOCAL BOARDS OF
4 EDUCATION TO PROVIDE INSTRUCTION ON DISABILITY HISTORY AND
5 AWARENESS.

6 Whereas, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 was founded on four
7 principles: inclusion, full participation, economic self-sufficiency, and equality of
8 opportunity for all people with disabilities; and

9 Whereas, the United States Census Bureau reported in 2000 that there were
10 1,117,577 people with disabilities in the State of North Carolina out of a total
11 population of 8,046,485; and

12 Whereas, most families are likely to become affected by someone with some
13 kind of disability; and

14 Whereas, the Nation Center for Education Statistics reported that during the
15 2003-2004 school year, North Carolina served 193,956 students with disabilities under
16 the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; and

17 Whereas, research has shown that students with disabilities encounter more
18 difficulty fitting in with their peers, making friends, and becoming involved in school
19 and community-based activities and clubs than their nondisabled peers; and

20 Whereas, in order to ensure the full inclusion of people with disabilities into
21 society, it is necessary to expand the public's knowledge, awareness, and understanding
22 of the history of disabilities and the disability rights movement; and

23 Whereas, October is recognized nationally as Disability Employment
24 Awareness Month; and

25 Whereas, designating Disability History and Awareness Month in North
26 Carolina will increase public awareness and respect for people with disabilities who
27 comprise a substantial percentage of North Carolina's population, teach future
28 generations that people with disabilities have a rich history and have made valuable

1 contributions throughout North Carolina and the United States, and ensure future
2 generations understand that disability is a natural part of life and that people with
3 disabilities have a right to be treated as individuals above all else; Now, therefore,
4 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

5 **SECTION 1.** Chapter 103 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a
6 new section to read:

7 **"§ 103-11. Disability History and Awareness Month.**

8 The month of October of each year is designated as Disability History and
9 Awareness Month in North Carolina."

10 **SECTION 2.** G.S. 115C-81 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

11 "(j) Disability History and Awareness. – Each local board of education shall
12 develop and implement instruction on disability, people with disabilities, and the
13 disability rights movement in conjunction with Disability History and Awareness
14 Month, established pursuant to G.S. 103-11. This instruction shall be incorporated into
15 the standard curriculum through measures that include: (i) supplementing existing
16 lesson plans, (ii) holding school assemblies, (iii) hosting disability-focused film
17 festivals, or (iv) organizing other school activities. Local boards of education are
18 encouraged to incorporate individuals with disabilities or knowledgeable guest speakers
19 from the disability community into the delivery of this instruction."

20 **SECTION 3.** The constituent institutions of The University of North
21 Carolina are encouraged to conduct and promote activities that provide education,
22 awareness, and understanding of disability history, people with disabilities, and the
23 disability rights movement.

24 **SECTION 4.** In recognition and to further the purposes of Disability History
25 and Awareness Month, the North Carolina General Assembly is encouraged on an
26 annual basis to:

- 27 (1) Reaffirm a commitment to the full inclusion of people with disabilities
28 in society.
- 29 (2) Recognize the disability rights movement as an important part of the
30 history of this State and nation and recognize leaders and examples of
31 leadership of people with disabilities in the State and the nation.
- 32 (3) Make information about community resources available to people with
33 disabilities.

34 **SECTION 5.** Nothing in this act shall require the General Assembly to
35 appropriate funds to implement it or require a local school administrative unit to spend
36 additional funds to implement it. The provisions of this act are not intended to create a
37 burden, financial or otherwise for public schools, teachers, or State institutions of higher
38 learning.

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