

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2007

SENATE BILL 1652
RATIFIED BILL

AN ACT TO MAKE TECHNICAL AMENDMENTS TO THE GENERAL
STATUTES TO CLARIFY LEGISLATIVE CONFIDENTIALITY OF PROGRAM
EVALUATION DIVISION DOCUMENTS.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1.(a) G.S. 120-36.13(a) reads as rewritten:

"(a) Plan. – The Joint Legislative Program Evaluation Oversight Committee, in consultation with the Director of the Program Evaluation Division, must establish an annual work plan for the Division. The Division must adhere to this annual plan, unless the Joint Legislative Program Evaluation Oversight Committee changes the annual plan to add a new evaluation or remove a planned evaluation. Any enacted legislation that directs the Program Evaluation Division to conduct a study or an evaluation is included in the annual work plan by operation of law.

The annual work plan constitutes an information request and a drafting request made by the Committee cochairs to legislative employees under Article 17 of Chapter 120 of the General Statutes. Any document prepared by a legislative employee pursuant to the annual work plan becomes available to the public only as provided in G.S. 120-131. Any document prepared by an agency employee pursuant to a request under G.S. 120-131.1(a1) becomes available to the public only as provided in G.S. 120-131."

SECTION 1.(b) G.S. 120-131.1 reads as rewritten:

"§ 120-131.1. Requests from legislative employees for assistance in the preparation of fiscal notes, notes and evaluation reports.

(a) ~~A request~~ request, including any accompanying documents, made to an agency employee of a State agency other than the General Assembly by an a legislative employee of the Fiscal Research Division for assistance in the preparation of a fiscal note is confidential. An employee of a An State agency employee other than the General Assembly who receives such a request or who learns of such a request made to another agency employee of his or her agency shall reveal the existence of the request only to other agency employees of the agency to the extent that it is necessary to respond to the request, and to the agency employee's supervisor and to the Office of State Budget and Management. All documents prepared by the agency employee in response to the request of the Fiscal Research Division are also confidential and shall be kept confidential in the same manner as the original request, except that documents submitted to the Fiscal Research Division in response to the request cease to be confidential under this section when the Fiscal Research Division releases a fiscal note based on the documents.

(a1) A request, and any accompanying documents, made to an agency employee by a legislative employee of the Program Evaluation Division for assistance in the preparation of an evaluation report is confidential. The request and any accompanying documents are not 'public records' as defined by G.S. 132-1. An agency employee who receives a request under this subsection or who learns of such a request made to another agency employee of his or her agency may reveal the existence of the request to other agency employees to the extent that it is necessary to respond to the request and to the agency employee's supervisor. All documents prepared by the agency employee in response to the request of a legislative employee of the Program Evaluation Division are

confidential, shall be kept confidential in the same manner as the original request, and are not 'public records' as defined in G.S. 132-1.

(b) As used in this section, "~~employee~~" 'agency employee' means an employee or officer of a ~~State agency~~ every agency of North Carolina government or its subdivisions, including every public office, public officer or official (State or local, elected or appointed), institution, board, commission, bureau, council, department, authority, or other unit of government of the State or of any county, unit, special district, or other political subdivision of government.

(c) Violation of this section may be grounds for disciplinary action."

SECTION 2.(a) G.S. 120-36.12 is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

"(10) To receive reports alleging improper activities or matters of public concern listed in G.S. 126-84. The individual making the report may, at the individual's discretion, remain anonymous. Any report received under this subdivision, in whatever form, shall not be a 'public record' as defined by G.S. 132-1 and becomes available to the public only as provided in G.S. 120-131."

SECTION 2.(b) G.S. 126-85(c) reads as rewritten:

"(c) The protections of this Article shall include State employees who report any activity described in G.S. 126-84 to the State Auditor as authorized by ~~G.S. 147-64.6(e)(16)~~ G.S. 147-64.6(c)(16) or to the Program Evaluation Division as authorized by G.S. 120-36.12(10)."

SECTION 3. Section 1 of this act is effective June 14, 2007. The remainder of this act is effective when it becomes law, and violations of Section 1 of this act prior to the date this act becomes law may not be grounds for disciplinary action.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 17th day of July, 2008.

Beverly E. Perdue
President of the Senate

Joe Hackney
Speaker of the House of Representatives

Michael F. Easley
Governor

Approved _____ .m. this _____ day of _____, 2008