

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2009**

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HOUSE BILL 1375

Short Title: Study Statewide Trauma System. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Stewart, Neumann (Primary Sponsors); Current, Glazier, Lucas, and Ross.

Referred to: Homeland Security, Military, and Veterans Affairs, if favorable, Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House, if favorable, Appropriations.

April 9, 2009

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT CREATING THE JOINT LEGISLATIVE STUDY COMMISSION ON THE STATEWIDE TRAUMA SYSTEM AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR THAT PURPOSE.

Whereas, trauma is the leading cause of death for children and for adults under the age of 45, and the fourth leading cause of death for all ages; and

Whereas, pursuant to G.S. 131E-162, the Office of Emergency Medical Services is responsible for monitoring system development, ensuring compliance with rules, and overseeing the effectiveness of a statewide trauma system; and

Whereas, as compared to emergency rooms and emergency departments, the trauma centers in this State treat the most severe, life-threatening blunt force injuries and penetrating injuries; and

Whereas, trauma centers are designated as Level I (providing services for multiple trauma 24 hours per day while also serving as leaders in trauma research and trauma education), Level II (providing community-based trauma services 24 hours per day), or Level III (providing stabilization and transfer of trauma patients to Level I and Level II centers, as appropriate); and

Whereas, approximately 12 hospitals in this State are designated as Level I, Level II, or Level III trauma centers; and

Whereas, trauma surgery is specifically designed to treat patients within the "golden hour," the period of time when the patient's chances of survival are greatest if he or she receives care in a designated trauma center within 60 minutes of the trauma incident; and

Whereas, the number of deaths per capita for trauma victims in this State increases by 80% when the trauma occurs outside a 35-mile radius from a trauma center; and

Whereas, trauma centers in this State accepted and treated more than 21,000 patients in 2008, and provide support to other health care providers in their region to optimize the initial care of injured patients; and

Whereas, there is a loss of \$3,300,000,000 each year in this State because of deaths related to trauma; and

Whereas, trauma centers are uniquely positioned to respond to emergencies of mass scale, such as terrorist attacks, based on their resources, constant state of readiness, extra capacity, and strong health care facility connections with the local and regional emergency care community; and



1 Whereas, a Statewide Trauma System requires coordination among trauma centers,
2 community and rural hospitals, emergency responders, law enforcement, and State and local
3 government; Now, therefore,

4 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

5 **SECTION 1.(a)** There is created the Joint Legislative Study Commission on the
6 Statewide Trauma System (Commission). The Commission shall consist of 15 voting members
7 appointed as follows:

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

- 10 a. Four members of the House of Representatives.
11 b. One person recommended by the State Trauma Advisory Council.
12 c. One person who is a hospital administrator at a hospital located in a
13 rural area of the State, recommended by the North Carolina Hospital
14 Association.
15 d. One member of the general public.

16 (2) Seven members appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, to
17 include:

- 18 a. Four members of the Senate.
19 b. One person recommended by the North Carolina Emergency Medical
20 Services Advisory Council.
21 c. One person who is a hospital administrator at a hospital located in an
22 urban area of the State, recommended by the North Carolina Hospital
23 Association.
24 d. One member of the general public.

25 (3) One member appointed by the Governor.

26 The Chief of the North Carolina Office of Emergency Medical Services, or the
27 Chief's designee, shall serve as an ex officio nonvoting member of the Commission.

28 **SECTION 1.(b)** The Commission shall:

- 29 (1) Assess the current General Statutes and State regulations pertaining to the
30 Statewide Trauma System to determine if any changes are necessary.
31 (2) Assess and identify gaps in the Statewide Trauma System with respect to
32 funding and service delivery.
33 (3) Assess the financial viability of the Statewide Trauma System.
34 (4) Determine the amount of funds the State should appropriate annually to the
35 Statewide Trauma System.
36 (5) Study any other matter related to the Statewide Trauma System that the
37 Commission deems relevant.
38 (6) Make an interim report to the 2010 Regular Session of the 2009 General
39 Assembly upon its convening.
40 (7) Make a final report to the 2011 General Assembly that includes findings,
41 recommendations, and legislative proposals relating to the delivery of
42 trauma care in this State.

43 **SECTION 1.(c)** The Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President
44 Pro Tempore of the Senate shall each appoint a cochair for the Commission. The Commission
45 may meet at any time upon the call of the cochairs. The Commission may meet in the
46 Legislative Building or the Legislative Office Building upon the approval of the Legislative
47 Services Commission. The Commission may contract for consultant services as provided by
48 G.S. 120-32.02. Upon approval of the Legislative Services Commission, the Legislative
49 Services Officer shall assign professional and clerical staff to assist in the work of the
50 Commission. Clerical staff shall be furnished to the Commission through the offices of the
51 House of Representatives' and the Senate's Directors of Legislative Assistants. Members of the

1 Commission shall receive per diem, subsistence, and travel allowances at the rate established in
2 G.S. 120-3.1. The appointing authority shall fill vacancies. The Commission, while in the
3 discharge of its official duties, may exercise all the powers provided under the provisions of
4 G.S. 120-19 through G.S. 120-19.4, including the power to request all officers, agents,
5 agencies, and departments of the State to provide any information, data, or documents within
6 their possession, ascertainable from their records, or otherwise available to them and the power
7 to subpoena witnesses.

8 **SECTION 1.(d)** The Commission shall terminate upon filing its final report.

9 **SECTION 2.** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the General
10 Assembly the sum of fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) for the 2009-2010 fiscal year and the sum
11 of fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) for the 2010-2011 fiscal year to fund the work of the
12 Legislative Study Commission on the Statewide Trauma System.

13 **SECTION 3.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2009.