

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2009**

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HOUSE DRH30139-LG-41 (2/3)

Short Title: Funds/Farmland Preservation Trust Fund. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Harrison, Allen, Hill, and Haire (Primary Sponsors).

Referred to:

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS FOR FARMLAND PRESERVATION.

3 Whereas, North Carolina's 52,913 farms provide food, fiber, economic activity,
4 wildlife habitat, natural resource protection, open space, and cultural heritage to North
5 Carolinians; and

6 Whereas, farms improve the quality of life for all North Carolinians while requiring
7 little or no public services or infrastructure; and

8 Whereas, agriculture and agribusiness are North Carolina's leading industry,
9 generating nearly \$71 billion for the economy and employing one in five members of our
10 workforce; and

11 Whereas, a productive and stable agricultural sector is important to farm families,
12 rural communities, local economies, and North Carolina's economic recovery; and

13 Whereas, landowners are looking for a wider range of options to help them develop
14 sustainable and profitable farms and pass them along to future generations; and

15 Whereas, North Carolina now has 67 voluntary agriculture districts which support
16 farmland preservation; and

17 Whereas, numerous State and local organizations have passed resolutions to support
18 the Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund, and nearly one-fourth of
19 all counties have passed or are currently considering county farmland protection plans; and

20 Whereas, funds appropriated to the Agricultural Development and Farmland
21 Preservation Trust Fund have been leveraged with funds from federal and local sources to
22 preserve agricultural land valued in excess of \$55 million since 2005; and

23 Whereas, funds appropriated to the Agricultural Development and Farmland
24 Preservation Trust Fund have been used to develop agricultural processing facilities that will
25 benefit small family farms; and

26 Whereas, the U.S. Department of Agriculture conducts an agricultural census every
27 five years, and the results of the 2007 census revealed a significant loss of 600,000 acres in
28 farmland in the State; and

29 Whereas, in 2007, the State had 8.5 million acres of farmland compared to 9.1
30 million acres in 2002; Now, therefore,

31 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

32 **SECTION 1.** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the North Carolina
33 Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund under G.S. 106-744 the sum
34 of four million dollars (\$4,000,000) for the 2009-2010 fiscal year to be used for the acquisition



1 of agricultural conservation easements or for the preservation of farmland as provided in
2 Article 61 of Chapter 106 of the General Statutes.

3 **SECTION 2.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2009.