

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 1991

CHAPTER 1020
HOUSE BILL 1386

AN ACT TO PERMIT THE COMMISSIONER OF LABOR TO IMPOSE PENALTIES AGAINST PUBLIC AGENCIES FOR OSHA VIOLATIONS AND TO REQUIRE LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL UNITS TO REPORT OSHA CITATIONS TO THEIR GOVERNING BOARDS.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

Section 1. G.S. 95-148 reads as rewritten:

"§ 95-148. Safety and health programs of State agencies and local governments.

It shall be the responsibility of each administrative department, commission, board, division or other agency of the State and of counties, cities, towns and subdivisions of government to establish and maintain an effective and comprehensive occupational safety and health program which is consistent with the standards and regulations promulgated under this Article. The head of each agency shall:

- (1) Provide safe and healthful places and conditions of employment, consistent with the standards and regulations promulgated by this Article;
- (2) Acquire, maintain, and require the use of safety equipment, personal protective equipment, and devices reasonably necessary to protect employees;
- (3) Consult with and encourage employees to cooperate in achieving safe and healthful working conditions;
- (4) Keep adequate records of all occupational accidents and illnesses for proper evaluation and corrective action;
- (5) Consult with the Commissioner as to the adequacy as to form and content of records kept pursuant to this section;
- (6) Make an annual report to the Commissioner with respect to occupational accidents and injuries and the agency's program under this section.

The Commissioner shall transmit annually to the Governor and the General Assembly a report of the activities of the State agency and instrumentalities under this section. If the Commissioner has reason to believe that any local government program or program of any agency of the State is ineffective, he shall, after unsuccessfully seeking by negotiations to abate such failure, include this in his annual report to the Governor and the General Assembly, together with the reasons therefor, and may recommend legislation intended to correct such condition.

The Commissioner shall have access to the records and reports kept and filed by State agencies and instrumentalities pursuant to this section unless such records and reports are required to be kept secret in the interest of national defense, in which case the Commissioner shall have access to such information as will not jeopardize national defense.

~~The Commissioner will not impose civil or criminal penalties against any State agency or political subdivision for violations described and covered by this Article.~~

Employees of any agency or department covered under this section are afforded the same rights and protections as granted employees in the private sector.

This section shall not apply to volunteer fire departments not a part of any municipality.

Any municipality with a population of 10,000 or less may exclude its fire department from the operation of this section by a resolution of the governing body of the municipality, except that the resolution may not exclude those firefighters who are employees of the municipality.

The North Carolina Fire and Rescue Commission shall recommend regulations and standards for fire departments."

Sec. 2. G.S. 95-137(a) reads as rewritten:

"(a) If, upon inspection or investigation, the Director or his authorized representative has reasonable grounds to believe that an employer has not fulfilled his duties as prescribed in this Article, or has violated any standard, regulation, rule or order promulgated under this Article, he shall with reasonable promptness issue a citation to the employer. Each citation shall be in writing and shall describe with particularity the nature of the violation, including a reference to the provisions of the act, standards, rules and regulations, or orders alleged to have been violated. In addition, the citation shall fix a reasonable time for the abatement of the violation. The Director may prescribe procedures for the issuance of a notice in lieu of a citation with respect to de minimus violations which have no direct or immediate relationship to safety or ~~health, and violations of State agencies or political subdivisions thereof~~health. Each citation or notice in lieu of citation issued under this section, or a copy or copies thereof, shall be prominently posted, as prescribed in regulations issued by the Director, at or near such place a violation referred to in the citation occurred."

Sec. 3. G.S. 95-137(b) is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

"(6) Each local unit of government shall report each violation for which it is issued a citation to its local governing board at its next public meeting and to its workers compensation insurance carrier or to the risk pool of which it is a member pursuant to Article 23 of Chapter 58 of the General Statutes."

Sec. 4. This act is effective upon ratification and applies to violations occurring on or after that date, except that fines levied pursuant to G.S. 95-138 against units of local government shall be assessed only for violations occurring on or after January 1, 1993.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 23rd day of July, 1992.

James C. Gardner
President of the Senate

Daniel Blue, Jr.
Speaker of the House of Representatives