

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2003

H

1

HOUSE BILL 858

Short Title: Funds for Occupational Continuing Education. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives C. Wilson, McHenry, Tolson (Primary Sponsors); Alexander, Barbee, Bell, Capps, Carney, Cole, Earle, England, Frye, Gibson, Gillespie, Glazier, Grady, Harrell, Hilton, Justice, Lewis, McGee, McMahan, Moore, Pate, Rapp, Ray, Rayfield, Rhodes, Sauls, Setzer, Stiller, Walend, and K. Williams.

Referred to: Appropriations.

April 7, 2003

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT TO PHASE IN PARITY FUNDING FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGE
OCCUPATIONAL CONTINUING EDUCATION COURSES TO ENHANCE
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

Whereas, industry and job demands increasingly call for more sophisticated training to be taught in shorter amounts of time; and

Whereas, as North Carolina's economy restructures, the skill demands of the future grow increasingly complex and technology-based; and

Whereas, requirements by industry, as well as government programs such as TANF and the Workforce Investment Act, are pushing training providers to be responsive to training time demands that are more compressed, concentrated, and flexible than typically allowed through community college curriculum programs; and

Whereas, the need for short-term training to meet the needs of a restructuring North Carolina economy are reflected in the initial goals recently laid out by the Workforce Development and Education Committee of the North Carolina Economic Development Board; and

Whereas, one of the four primary workforce development goals recently established is to expand flexible, nondegree based training programs to support economic development and respond to the needs of workers and employers; and

Whereas, the Board is currently looking for specific objective steps to accomplish this goal; and

Whereas, previous Economic Development Boards, as well as the North Carolina Workforce Development Commission have called for community college enhancements in short-term training; and

1 Whereas, the key challenge for North Carolina community colleges is
2 responding to the needs of a changing economy, is the cost of providing concentrated,
3 short-term technical skills training in the areas demanded by business and industry; and

4 Whereas, specifically, the recommendation is that starting in the 2003-2005
5 biennium, the General Assembly appropriate occupational continuing education
6 expansion funding in supplements of three million dollars (\$3,000,000) per year; and

7 Whereas, in each of four biennia, the State Board would target highly
8 strategic occupational continuing education course offerings for full parity funding in
9 each biennium; and

10 Whereas, courses eligible for full funding would be those that train
11 individuals in preparation for recognized certifications or licensures, in occupations of
12 high priority for workforce development; Now, therefore,
13 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

14 **SECTION 1.** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the
15 Community Colleges System Office the sum of three million dollars (\$3,000,000) for
16 the 2003-2004 fiscal year and three million dollars (\$3,000,000) for the 2004-2005
17 fiscal year to be used for occupational continuing education. The State Board of
18 Community Colleges shall use these funds to target highly strategic occupational
19 continuing education course offerings for full parity funding. Courses eligible for full
20 funding are those that train individuals in preparation for recognized certifications or
21 licensures in occupations of high priority for workforce development in the following
22 categories:

- 23 (1) Telecommunication, information and biotechnology,
- 24 (2) Safety, health, and emergency,
- 25 (3) Trades and technical programs, and
- 26 (4) Service, managerial, and professional.

27 **SECTION 2.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2003.