

**NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**LEGISLATIVE FISCAL NOTE**

**BILL NUMBER:** House Bill 92 (Second Edition)

**SHORT TITLE:** Increase Nonresident Search Fee

**SPONSOR(S):** Representatives Jeffus, Barefoot, and Wainwright

**FISCAL IMPACT**

**Yes (X)                  No ( )                  No Estimate Available ( )**

**FY 2001-02    FY 2002-03    FY 2003-04    FY 2004-05    FY 2005-06**

**REVENUES**

General Fund

Departmental Receipt

See ASSUMPTIONS AND METHODOLOGY

**EXPENDITURES**

**PRINCIPAL DEPARTMENT(S) &**

**PROGRAM(S) AFFECTED:** Department of Cultural Resources – Division of Archives and History

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** This act is effective on July 1, 2001.

**BILL SUMMARY:** The bill allows the Department of Cultural Resources to increase the fee charged nonresidents for searches of archived public records from a maximum of \$10 to a maximum of \$25.

**BACKGROUND:** This bill was a recommendation of the Legislative Research Commission’s Committee on Digitization of Public Records by State Archives. The Committee requested the fee increase to “provide additional funds to defray expanding cost for services, yet allow the search fee in North Carolina to remain competitive with fees in other Southeastern states.” The Committee found the following nonresident search fees in the Southeastern states:

Alabama	\$20	Mississippi	\$15
Florida	0	South Carolina	None
Georgia	\$25	Tennessee	\$3 to \$5
Kentucky	\$12	Virginia	\$20
Maryland	\$8		

**ASSUMPTIONS AND METHODOLOGY:** Based on past revenue collections from nonresident search requests, a fee increase from \$10 to \$25 could generate an additional \$67,500 in revenue. However, the Division of Archives and History has stated that it has no immediate plans to increase the nonresident search fee. Current revenues from the \$10 fee are sufficient to cover the cost of a 32 hour per week Processing Assistant IV position (pay grade 59) that copies requested records and handles correspondence. The previous \$8 nonresident search fee raised an average of \$35,832 per year from FY 1997-98 to FY 1999-00. The average number of searches in that period was 4,479 per year. The Division of Archives and History anticipates their annual number of nonresident searches to continue at 4,500 per year. At \$10 per search, the agency will receive \$45,000 each year. If increased to the maximum \$25 allowed in this bill, the agency would receive \$112,500. If the fee were increased, the agency believes demand for services would not decline.

**FISCAL RESEARCH DIVISION 733-4910**

**PREPARED BY:** Richard Bostic

**APPROVED BY:** James D. Johnson

**DATE:** March 19, 2001



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