

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2009

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SENATE BILL 832

Short Title: CRC May Permit Terminal Groin. (Public)

Sponsors: Senators Boseman; Brown, Preston, and Soles.

Referred to: Agriculture/Environment/Natural Resources.

March 25, 2009

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
2 AN ACT TO PROVIDE THAT THE COASTAL RESOURCES COMMISSION MAY  
3 AUTHORIZE THE CONSTRUCTION OF A TERMINAL GROIN BY VARIANCE IF  
4 CERTAIN CRITERIA ARE MET.

5 Whereas, the State of North Carolina has 320 miles of coastline and 19 inlets that  
6 are both a public trust and a significant economic resource; and

7 Whereas, shifting inlets have resulted in enormous losses of public beach access,  
8 property, business, and infrastructure, costing counties and cities all along North Carolina's  
9 coast tens of millions of dollars in reconstruction cost and lost tax revenue; and

10 Whereas, every coastal state in the U.S. except North Carolina and Oregon allow for  
11 some manner of protection from the problem of shifting inlets; and

12 Whereas, a terminal groin, also known as a terminal structure, is a structure that is  
13 built on one side of an inlet shoreline to prevent movement of sand into the inlet or on an  
14 isolated segment of shoreline where it will not interrupt the natural movement of sand along the  
15 shoreline; and

16 Whereas, inlets in North Carolina at Fort Macon and Pea Island are already  
17 successfully protected by terminal structures; and

18 Whereas, a terminal structure is unobtrusive and permeable, basically placing a  
19 template back where the land and beach was, allowing it to fill again with sand without  
20 detrimental consequences to the coastline; and

21 Whereas, a terminal structure differs both in form and in function from other erosion  
22 control structures such as seawalls or jetties; and

23 Whereas, it is reasonable to allow the Coastal Resources Commission to consider  
24 authorizing the construction of a terminal structure by variance or by rule making if the  
25 Commission finds that the criteria for issuance of a variance are met or adopts rules allowing  
26 construction; Now, therefore,

27 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

28 **SECTION 1.** G.S. 113A-115.1 reads as rewritten:

29 **"§ 113A-115.1. Limitations on erosion control structures.**

30 (a) As used in this section:

31 (1) "Erosion control structure" means a breakwater, bulkhead, groin, jetty,  
32 revetment, seawall, or any similar structure.

33 (1a) "Littoral cell" means any section of coastline that has its own sediment  
34 sources and sediment sinks and is isolated from adjacent coastal reaches in  
35 terms of sediment movement.

36 (2) "Ocean shoreline" means the Atlantic Ocean, the oceanfront beaches, and  
37 frontal dunes. The term "ocean shoreline" includes an ocean inlet and lands



1 adjacent to an ocean inlet but does not include that portion of any inlet and  
2 lands adjacent to the inlet that exhibits characteristics of estuarine shorelines.

3 (3) "Temporary erosion control structure" means sandbags placed above mean  
4 high water and parallel to the ocean shoreline regardless of time limits  
5 imposed on any permit.

6 (4) "Terminal groin" means a groin that is constructed at the end of a littoral cell  
7 or on the side of an inlet to limit or control sediment passage into the inlet  
8 channel.

9 (b) No person shall construct a permanent erosion control structure in an ocean  
10 shoreline. The Commission shall not permit the construction of a temporary erosion control  
11 structure that consists of anything other than sandbags in an ocean shoreline. This section shall  
12 not apply to (i) any permanent erosion control structure that is approved pursuant to an  
13 exception set out in a rule adopted by the Commission prior to 1 July 2003 or (ii) any  
14 permanent erosion control structure that was originally constructed prior to 1 July 1974 and that  
15 has since been in continuous use to protect an inlet that is maintained for navigation. This  
16 section shall not be construed to limit the authority of the Commission to adopt rules to  
17 designate or protect areas of environmental concern, to govern the use of sandbags, or to  
18 govern the use of erosion control structures in estuarine shorelines.

19 (c) The Commission may renew a permit for an erosion control structure issued  
20 pursuant to a variance granted by the Commission prior to 1 July 1995. The Commission may  
21 authorize the replacement of a permanent erosion control structure that was permitted by the  
22 Commission pursuant to a variance granted by the Commission prior to 1 July 1995 if the  
23 Commission finds that: (i) the structure will not be enlarged beyond the dimensions set out in  
24 the original permit; (ii) there is no practical alternative to replacing the structure that will  
25 provide the same or similar benefits; and (iii) the replacement structure will comply with all  
26 applicable laws and with all rules, other than the rule or rules with respect to which the  
27 Commission granted the variance, that are in effect at the time the structure is replaced.

28 (d) In addition to the exceptions set out in subsection (b) of this section, the  
29 Commission may approve a permit for construction of a terminal groin as a sediment  
30 management device pursuant to a variance under G.S. 113A-120.1 or through rule making. A  
31 permit may be issued under this section notwithstanding Commission rules or policies that  
32 would otherwise prohibit such construction. Every application for a permit to construct a  
33 terminal groin under this section shall be accompanied by an environmental impact statement  
34 that meets the requirements of G.S. 113A-4. A permit issued for a terminal groin pursuant to  
35 this section may require any permittee other than a State agency, federal agency, or unit of local  
36 government to provide financial assurance, in the form of a bond, insurance policy, escrow  
37 account, or other financial instrument, that is adequate to cover the cost of removal of the  
38 terminal groin if the Commission determines through monitoring results that the terminal groin  
39 project has an adverse impact on the environment or on other properties that cannot be  
40 sufficiently mitigated. The Commission may require the permittee to maintain financial  
41 assurance provided under this subsection for no more than five years after construction of the  
42 terminal groin."

43 **SECTION 2.** This act is effective when it becomes law and expires July 1, 2013.