## SESSION 2011

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GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA

SENATE BILL 552

Short Title: Regional Public Health Authority Pilot. (Public)

Sponsors: Senator Hartsell.

Referred to: Health Care.

## April 12, 2011

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO PROMOTE EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS IN THE LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH DELIVERY SYSTEM BY DIRECTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES TO CREATE INCENTIVES FOR SMALL COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENTS TO BECOME REGIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH AUTHORITIES.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

**SECTION 1.** The Health and Wellness Trust Fund Commission shall allocate from available Health and Wellness Trust Fund funds in the 2011-2012 fiscal year the sum of up to six million dollars (\$6,000,000) to the Department of Health and Human Services, which shall be credited to a nonreverting account within the Department. Funds in the account shall be used to establish and promote the formation of regional public health authorities through the provision of the incentive funding pilot established by the Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health, in accordance with this act.

**SECTION 2.** The Department shall implement a regional public health authority incentive funding pilot program as follows: (i) Counties shall create a public health authority in accordance with G.S. 130A-45.02(b); (ii) to qualify for incentive funding, the regional authority shall provide health services in a catchment that includes either a minimum of 15 counties or contains a minimum population of 500,000. Counties with populations of 500,000 or more shall be eligible to receive incentive funding only if they combine with another county; (iii) regions should coincide with boundaries of other preexisting health relevant districts and planning regions whenever possible; (iv) incentive funds shall be allocated to each county within the region with a minimum allocation of two dollars (\$2.00) per capita per year; (v) funding shall be limited to three consecutive yearly allocations; (vi) incentive funds shall be granted only after adoption of resolutions required to create the new regional health authority in accordance with G.S. 130A-45.02. Disbursement of funds shall be initiated at the beginning of the fiscal year following the creation of the new regional health authority. Any county that receives incentive funding pursuant to this section shall return one-third of the total incentive funding received if the county leaves the authority in order to operate as a single county health department.

**SECTION 3.** The Department shall report by May 1, 2012, on the progress of the pilot project and shall include a review of the capacity of small counties to meet the core public health functions mandated by current State and federal law and whether the State should establish minimum populations for local health departments. The Department shall submit the report to the Public Health Study Commission, the House of Representatives Appropriations Subcommittee on Health and Human Services, the Senate Appropriations Committee on Health and Human Services, and the Fiscal Research Division.



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**SECTION 4.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2011.