

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2019**

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**HOUSE BILL 1063**

Short Title: Fund VIPER Tower Hardware Upgrades. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives McNeill, Boles, and Davis (Primary Sponsors).

*For a complete list of sponsors, refer to the North Carolina General Assembly web site.*

Referred to: Appropriations, if favorable, Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House

May 8, 2020

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS FOR THE PURPOSE OF UPGRADING BASE  
STATIONS OF THE VOICE INTEROPERABILITY PLAN FOR EMERGENCY  
RESPONDERS (VIPER) NETWORK.

Whereas, communication in any emergency is critical to the response of emergency personnel; and

Whereas, the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic has caused an unprecedented spike in the number and complexity of emergency requests from North Carolina citizens; and

Whereas, our emergency responders depend on a reliable communication network supported by reliable, state of the art, updated equipment to help in their response to emergencies; and

Whereas, during this pandemic the citizens of North Carolina depend on their government to ensure that there is a reliable communication network supported by reliable, state of the art, updated equipment to allow emergency personnel to respond to their emergency calls for assistance; and

Whereas, VIPER, Voice Interoperability Plan for Emergency Responders, is the State of North Carolina's emergency response network; and

Whereas, VIPER includes the VIPER Medical Network, which enables emergency responders to communicate with hospital emergency rooms; and

Whereas, the Program Evaluation Division of the North Carolina General Assembly recommended in 2018 that the VIPER network needed funding to update radio equipment and software to replace outdated equipment no longer supported by the manufacturer; and

Whereas, to this date, only approximately one-third of the funds necessary to replace this outdated equipment has actually been appropriated; Now, therefore, The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

**SECTION 1.** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Public Safety the sum of nineteen million eight hundred thousand five hundred thirty dollars (\$19,800,530) in nonrecurring funds for the 2020-2021 fiscal year to be used for the Voice Interoperability Plan for Emergency Responders (VIPER) network for continued base station upgrades (Fund Code 1710).

**SECTION 2.** If House Bill 966, 2019 Regular Session, becomes law, then any provision of that act, or the Committee Report described in that act, appropriating or allocating funds to the Department of Public Safety for the Voice Interoperability Plan for Emergency Responders (VIPER) network tower hardware upgrades is repealed.



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**SECTION 3.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2020.