

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA**

**SESSION 1997**

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**SENATE BILL 1453**

Short Title: Widen Interstates.

(Public)

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Sponsors: Senators Shaw of Cumberland; Ballance, Cooper, Dannelly, Jenkins, Lucas, Martin of Guilford, Miller, Plyler, Purcell, Rand, Reeves, Warren, Weinstein, Wellons, and Winner.

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Referred to: Transportation.

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May 28, 1998

1                                   A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
2 AN ACT TO ENCOURAGE THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION TO USE  
3 ADDITIONAL FUNDS FROM THE FEDERAL HIGHWAY  
4 REAUTHORIZATION BILL OF 1998 TO EXPEDITE WIDENING OF  
5 INTERSTATE HIGHWAYS TO AT LEAST SIX LANES.

Whereas, the recent widening of selected interstate highways in North Carolina have helped to sustain the remarkable economic growth in the Charlotte to Raleigh region, by ensuring the continued rapid flow of goods and services to business and industry in that area; and

Whereas, the updated and improved Piedmont interstate corridor has recently attracted additional industrial development, benefiting the citizens of the State by creating additional and better job opportunities; and

Whereas, the benefits of the rapid economic growth in the State have not been evenly distributed among all of North Carolina's citizens; and

Whereas, expanded and modern multilane limited access interstates are vital for balanced economic growth in other regions of the State, such as eastern and southeastern North Carolina; and

Whereas, high traffic volume on interstate highways in the eastern and southeastern part of the State pose a threat to the safety of thousands of North Carolinians and visitors each day; and

Whereas, North Carolina stands to receive a substantial increase in federal highway funds from the recently enacted federal transportation act; Now, therefore,

1 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

2           Section 1. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Department of  
3 Transportation shall consider giving higher priority to planning, design, and engineering  
4 work on expansion of interstate highways in the State to six lanes. The Department shall  
5 consider accelerating interstate expansions and improvements in underserved areas of the  
6 State, such as eastern and southeastern North Carolina. The Department shall consider  
7 using the additional federal transportation funds received in fiscal year 1998-99 that are  
8 in excess of the amount of federal transportation funds received in fiscal year 1997-98 to  
9 begin or accelerate planning, design, and engineering work on these interstate highway  
10 projects. The Department shall report to the General Assembly by February 1, 1999, on  
11 its efforts to speed interstate expansion projects.

12           Section 2. This act becomes effective July 1, 1998.