

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2019

H.B. 1063
May 6, 2020
HOUSE PRINCIPAL CLERK

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HOUSE BILL DRH30555-NDa-139

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

Sponsors: Representative McNeill.

Referred to:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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23 software to replace outdated equipment no longer supported by the manufacturer; and

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25 this outdated equipment has actually been appropriated; Now, therefore,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

27 **SECTION 1.** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of
28 Public Safety the sum of nineteen million eight hundred thousand five hundred thirty dollars
29 (\$19,800,530) in nonrecurring funds for the 2020-2021 fiscal year to be used for the Voice
30 Interoperability Plan for Emergency Responders (VIPER) network for continued base station
31 upgrades (Fund Code 1710).

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

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



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