

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2023**

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**HOUSE BILL 998**

Short Title: Blue Ribbon Task Force/Sewer Infrastructure. (Public)

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Sponsors: Representative Everitt.

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

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

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May 6, 2024

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
2 AN ACT TO ESTABLISH THE BLUE RIBBON TASK FORCE ON WASTEWATER  
3 INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT IN NORTH CAROLINA.

4 Whereas, the development of wastewater infrastructure is essential to economic  
5 growth in North Carolina, particularly rural areas and rapidly developing suburban counties of  
6 the State; and

7 Whereas, the State Water Infrastructure Authority estimated in 2017 that there was  
8 \$11 billion in unmet wastewater infrastructure capital needs across the State; and

9 Whereas, it is in the interest of the State's environment and citizens to have access to  
10 modern, functional wastewater infrastructure; Now, therefore,  
11 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

12 **SECTION 1.(a)** Establishment; Purpose. – The Blue Ribbon Task Force on  
13 Wastewater Infrastructure Development in North Carolina (Task Force) is established. The  
14 purpose of the Task Force is (i) to review and assess the current state of wastewater infrastructure  
15 in the State, (ii) to develop strategies and plans for the effective implementation of wastewater  
16 treatment projects, for addressing existing challenges and barriers to project financing and  
17 construction, and for addressing future needs within the State, and (iii) to identify funding  
18 mechanisms, including potential contributions from industrial wastewater discharges, to support  
19 wastewater infrastructure development.

20 **SECTION 1.(b)** Task Force. – The Task Force shall consist of 18 members,  
21 appointed as follows:

- 22 (1) Four members of the House of Representatives upon the recommendation of  
23 the Speaker of the House of Representatives, one of whom shall be a member  
24 of the minority party.
- 25 (2) Four members of the Senate upon the recommendation of the President Pro  
26 Tempore of the Senate, one of whom shall be a member of the minority party.
- 27 (3) The Director of the Division of Water Infrastructure of the Department of  
28 Environmental Quality or the Director's designee, ex officio and nonvoting.
- 29 (4) The Director of the Local Government Commission or the Director's designee,  
30 ex officio and nonvoting.
- 31 (5) Four county commissioners, who are advisory and nonvoting, one of whom is  
32 appointed upon the recommendation of the Speaker of the House of  
33 Representatives, one of whom is appointed upon the recommendation of the  
34 Minority Leader of the House of Representatives, one of whom is appointed  
35 upon the recommendation of the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, and



1 one of whom is appointed upon the recommendation of the Minority Leader  
2 of the Senate.

3 (6) Four representatives of a local government wastewater entity, who are  
4 advisory and nonvoting, one of whom is appointed upon the recommendation  
5 of the Speaker of the House of Representatives, one of whom is appointed  
6 upon the recommendation of the Minority Leader of the House of  
7 Representatives, one of whom is appointed upon the recommendation of the  
8 President Pro Tempore of the Senate, and one of whom is appointed upon the  
9 recommendation of the Minority Leader of the Senate. For purposes of this  
10 act, a local government wastewater entity is any of the following:

- 11 a. A water and sewer authority created pursuant to Article 1 of Chapter  
12 162A of the General Statutes.
- 13 b. A metropolitan sewerage district created pursuant to Article 5 of  
14 Chapter 162A of the General Statutes.
- 15 c. A metropolitan water and sewerage district created pursuant to Article  
16 5A of Chapter 162A of the General Statutes.
- 17 d. A county water and sewer district created pursuant to Article 6 of  
18 Chapter 162A of the General Statutes.
- 19 e. A sanitary district created pursuant to Part 2 of Article 2 of Chapter  
20 130A of the General Statutes that is providing wastewater collection  
21 or treatment services.
- 22 f. A joint agency created pursuant to Part 1 or Part 5 of Article 20 of  
23 Chapter 160A of the General Statutes that is providing wastewater.

24 **SECTION 1.(c)** The President Pro Tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the  
25 House of Representatives shall each appoint a cochair of the Task Force from among its  
26 membership.

27 **SECTION 1.(d)** The Task Force shall meet upon the call of its cochairs. A quorum  
28 of the Task Force is a majority of its members. No action may be taken except by a majority vote  
29 at a meeting at which a quorum is present. The Task Force, while in the discharge of its official  
30 duties, may exercise all powers provided for under G.S. 120-19 through G.S. 120-19.4. The Task  
31 Force may contract for professional, clerical, or consultant services, as provided by  
32 G.S. 120-32.02. If the Task Force hires a consultant, the consultant shall not be a State employee  
33 or a person currently under contract with the State to provide services. Members of the Task  
34 Force shall receive per diem, subsistence, and travel allowances as provided in G.S. 120-3.1. The  
35 expenses of the Task Force shall be considered expenses incurred for the joint operation of the  
36 General Assembly.

37 **SECTION 1.(e)** In conducting this study, the Task Force shall consult with  
38 representatives of the Department of Commerce, the Economic Development Partnership of  
39 North Carolina, the Utilities Commission, and the Golden LEAF Foundation.

40 **SECTION 1.(f)** The Legislative Services Officer shall assign professional and  
41 clerical staff to assist the Task Force in its work. The Director of Legislative Assistants of the  
42 House of Representatives and the Director of Legislative Assistants of the Senate shall assign  
43 clerical support to the Task Force.

44 **SECTION 1.(g)** Meetings of the Task Force are authorized to begin on or after July  
45 1, 2024. The Task Force shall submit a final report on the results of its study, including proposed  
46 legislation, to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Agriculture and Natural and  
47 Economic Resources on or before December 1, 2026, by filing a copy of the report with the  
48 Office of the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, the Office of the Speaker of the House of  
49 Representatives, the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Agriculture and Natural and  
50 Economic Resources, and the Legislative Library. The Task Force shall terminate on December  
51 1, 2026, or upon the filing of its final report, whichever comes first.

1                   **SECTION 1.(h)** The sum of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) in recurring funds for  
2 the 2024-2025 fiscal year is appropriated from the unappropriated balance remaining in the  
3 General Fund to support the activities of the Task Force.

4                   **SECTION 2.** This act is effective when it becomes law.