

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
1985 SESSION

CHAPTER 843
SENATE BILL 634

AN ACT TO PERMIT GRAND JURIES TO INVESTIGATE DRUG TRAFFICKING, TO INCREASE THE MAXIMUM TERM OF IMPRISONMENT FOR CRIMINAL CONTEMPT FOR REFUSING TO TESTIFY AFTER BEING GRANTED IMMUNITY, AND TO LIMIT THE SCOPE OF IMMUNITY GRANTED WITNESSES TO USE IMMUNITY.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

Section 1. G.S. 5A-12(a) is amended by deleting the words "six months" and substituting the words "18 months".

Sec. 2. G.S. 15A-622 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

"(h) A written petition for convening of grand jury under this section may be filed by the district attorney, with the concurrence of the Attorney General, with the Clerk of the North Carolina Supreme Court. The Chief Justice shall appoint a panel of three judges to determine whether to order the grand jury convened. A grand jury under this section may be convened if the three-judge panel determines that:

- (1) The petition alleges the commission of or a conspiracy to commit a violation of G.S. 90-95(h) or G.S. 90-95.1, any part of which violation or conspiracy occurred in the county where the grand jury sits, and that persons named in the petition have knowledge related to the identity of the perpetrators of those crimes but will not divulge that knowledge voluntarily or that such persons request that they be allowed to testify before the grand jury; and
- (2) The affidavit sets forth facts that establish probable cause to believe that the crimes specified in the petition have been committed and reasonable grounds to suspect that the persons named in the petition have knowledge related to the identity of the perpetrators of those crimes.

The affidavit shall be based upon personal knowledge or, if the source of the information and basis for the belief are stated, upon information and belief. The panel's order convening the grand jury as an investigative grand jury shall direct the grand jury to investigate the crimes and persons named in the petition, and shall be filed with the Clerk of the North Carolina Supreme Court. A grand jury so convened retains all powers, duties, and responsibilities of a grand jury under this Article. The contents of the petition and the affidavit shall not be disclosed. Upon receiving a petition under this subsection, the Chief Justice shall appoint a panel to determine whether the grand jury should be convened as an investigative grand jury."

Sec. 3. G.S. 15A-623 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

"(h) If a grand jury is convened pursuant to G.S. 15A-622(h), notwithstanding subsection (d) of this section, a prosecutor shall be present to examine witnesses, and a court reporter shall be present and record the examination of witnesses. If the prosecutor determines that it is necessary to compel testimony from the witness, he may grant use immunity to the witness. The grant of use immunity shall be given to the witness in writing by the prosecutor and shall be signed by the prosecutor. The written grant of use immunity shall also be read into the record by the prosecutor and shall include an explanation of use immunity as provided in G.S. 15A-1051. A witness shall have the right to leave the grand jury room to consult with his counsel at reasonable intervals and for a reasonable period of time upon the request of the witness. Notwithstanding subsection (e) of this section, the record of the examination of witnesses shall be made available to the examining prosecutor, and he may disclose contents of the record to other investigative or law enforcement officers to the extent that the disclosure is appropriate to the proper performance of his official duties. The record of the examination of a witness may be used in a trial to corroborate or impeach that witness to the extent that it is relevant and otherwise admissible. Further disclosure of grand jury proceedings convened pursuant to this act may be made upon written order of a superior court judge if the judge determines disclosure is essential:

- (1) To prosecute a witness who appeared before the grand jury for contempt or perjury; or
- (2) To protect a defendant's constitutional rights or statutory rights to discovery pursuant to G.S. 15A- 903.

Upon the convening of the investigative grand jury pursuant to approval by the three judge panel, the district attorney shall subpoena the witnesses. The subpoena shall be served by the investigative grand jury officer, who shall be appointed by the court. The name of the person subpoenaed and the issuance and service of the subpoena shall not be disclosed, except that a witness so subpoenaed may divulge that information. A copy of all subpoenas and other process shall be returned to the Chief Justice or to such member of the three judge panel as the Chief Justice may designate, to be filed with the Clerk of the North Carolina Supreme Court. The subpoena shall otherwise be subject to the provisions of G.S. 15A-801. When an investigative grand jury has completed its investigation of the crimes alleged in the petition, the investigative functions of the grand jury shall be dissolved and such investigation shall cease. The District Attorney shall file a notice of dissolution of the investigative functions of the grand jury with the Clerk of the North Carolina Supreme Court."

Sec. 4. G.S. 15A-1051(a) is amended by rewriting the third sentence of that subsection to read:

"Except as provided in G.S. 15A-623(h), no testimony or other information so compelled, or any information directly or indirectly derived from the testimony or other information, may be used against the witness in a criminal case, except a prosecution for perjury or contempt arising from a failure to comply with an order of the court. In the event of a prosecution of the witness he shall be entitled to a record of his testimony."

Sec. 5. G.S. 8-57(b) is amended by adding, immediately following the word "defendant" the second time it appears in subsection (b), the words: "in any criminal action or grand jury proceedings".

Sec. 6. This act shall become effective October 1, 1986 and shall expire October 1, 1988, but the said expiration date shall not affect the term or authority of a grand jury constituted at that time.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified, this the 30th day of June, 1986.