

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA**

**SESSION 1989**

**S**

**1**

**SENATE BILL 1158**

Short Title: Genetic Disorders Funds.

(Public)

---

Sponsors: Senators Walker; Tally and Hunt of Moore.

---

Referred to: Appropriations.

---

May 3, 1989

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1 AN ACT TO PROVIDE FUNDS FOR THE PREVENTION OF INFANT  
2 MORTALITY, MENTAL RETARDATION, AND PHYSICAL DEFORMITIES  
3 DUE TO GENETIC DISORDERS.  
4

5 Whereas, more than one million North Carolinians now have or will have  
6 genetically influenced disease; and

7 Whereas, more than 180,000 North Carolinians are mentally retarded and  
8 2,500 babies born each year are destined to become mentally retarded; and

9 Whereas, eighty percent (80%) of mental retardation has a genetic basis; and

10 Whereas, North Carolina has one of the highest infant mortality rates in the  
11 United States; and

12 Whereas, forty percent (40%) of all infant mortality is due to genetic  
13 conditions; and

14 Whereas, genetic factors are important causes of birth defects, and over 3,000  
15 children are born each year in North Carolina with birth defects; and

16 Whereas, over half of all fetal deaths are caused by genetic defects; and

17 Whereas, over 6,000 babies conceived each year in North Carolina have  
18 chromosome abnormalities that cause birth defects and brain damage; and

19 Whereas, approximately one-third of all pediatric referral hospital admissions  
20 are due to genetic conditions; and

21 Whereas, one-half of all blindness in children is due to genetic factors; and

22 Whereas, genetic factors are important causes of common diseases of adult  
23 life such as heart disease, cancer, diabetes, emphysema, strokes, high blood pressure,  
24 and psychiatric illness; and

1           Whereas, muscular dystrophy, cystic fibrosis, hemophilia, sickle cell anemia,  
2 X-linked mental retardation, and Tay-Sachs disease are examples of genetic diseases;  
3 and

4           Whereas, all citizens of North Carolina carry mutations in their genes and  
5 chromosomes that could potentially cause significant disease or disability in them or  
6 their children; and

7           Whereas, serious genetic disorders cost families and the State millions of  
8 dollars annually for medical care, lost productivity, and institutionalization; and

9           Whereas, genetic health care services, including clinical diagnosis, laboratory  
10 diagnosis, and treatment and prevention counseling, can significantly reduce the impact  
11 of handicapping genetic disorders, both in human and fiscal terms; and

12           Whereas, greater accessibility to genetic health care services would be  
13 provided if the North Carolina medical genetics centers had additional funds for  
14 medical, laboratory, and counseling staff and equipment; Now, therefore,  
15 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

16           Section 1. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Division of  
17 Health Services, Department of Human Resources, \$900,000 for the 1989-90 fiscal year  
18 and \$900,000 for the 1990-91 fiscal year to provide for expansion of genetic health care  
19 services through medical genetics centers.

20           Sec. 2. This act shall become effective July 1, 1989.