

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA

EXTRA SESSION 1994

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HOUSE BILL 117

Short Title: Durham Impact/CHOICE Funds.

(Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Luebke; Easterling, Mosley, Michaux, Jeffus, and G. Miller.

Referred to: Appropriations.

February 14, 1994

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1 AN ACT TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS FOR THE DURHAM IMPACT PROGRAM
2 AND THE COALITION FOR HOLISTIC OPPORTUNITIES IN CHILDREN'S
3 EDUCATION.
4

5 Whereas, Durham County has realized sharp increases in juvenile crime,
6 teen-age pregnancy, school dropout rates, children with AIDS/HIV infection, and drug
7 and alcohol abuse among young people; and

8 Whereas, the average age of the juvenile offender is continuing to drop, and
9 their crimes are becoming more extreme; and

10 Whereas, Durham County is ranked 10th in the State for the number of
11 juveniles in detention or training schools; and

12 Whereas, more than one out of every five children in Durham County lives in
13 poverty, and 27% of Durham's children are in single parent families; and

14 Whereas, over the past three years, reports of child abuse and neglect in
15 Durham County have increased 33%; and

16 Whereas, in addition to increased numbers of teen-age pregnancies and
17 substance abuse among young people, insufficient medical attention is reaching crisis
18 levels among the young; and

19 Whereas, Durham County has the highest percentage of young people with
20 AIDS/HIV infection in North Carolina; and

21 Whereas, since the fall of the 1987-88 school year, more than 3,500 students
22 have dropped out of Durham's public schools; and

1 Whereas, the National Dropout Prevention Center reports that each high
2 school dropout is three times more likely to be arrested, two times more likely to be
3 unemployed, and six times more likely to be a single parent; and

4 Whereas, Durham Companions is a private, nonprofit agency that provides
5 holistic, early intervention programs for at-risk youth and their families; and

6 Whereas, in July of 1993, Durham Companions created The Coalition for
7 Holistic Opportunities in Children's Education, or CHOICE, which offered services to
8 34 middle-school aged children referred by court intake officers, school counselors, law
9 enforcement officials, health care providers, and parents; and

10 Whereas, CHOICE recognizes that the problems facing at-risk children are
11 multifaceted and complex, and that no single issue can be adequately addressed by
12 itself; and

13 Whereas, CHOICE is a multiple-intervention strategy and a high-dosage
14 program designed in a "whole child" effort, operating for two months during the
15 summer and two weeks during the winter holiday season; and

16 Whereas, CHOICE offers tutors to assist in educational remediation, wide-
17 scale counseling on violence prevention, workshops to teach parents about children's
18 issues of health, education, and conflict-mediation, special health segments on
19 substance abuse and teen pregnancy, and group cultural and recreational activities
20 aimed at goal setting and enhancing self-esteem in at-risk youth; and

21 Whereas, in March of 1982, Durham Companions created Durham Impact
22 using the Governor's One-on-One program model to provide mentors and monthly
23 group events for children who show potential risk for criminal involvement; and

24 Whereas, both CHOICE and Durham Impact have set the foundation for
25 improved academic performance, social development, and reduction in subsequent court
26 involvement; and

27 Whereas, 100% of the children served in CHOICE and Durham Impact have
28 stayed in school and out of trouble; and

29 Whereas, Durham Companions has successfully established an unprecedented
30 coordination of services in Durham County to assist at-risk youth, including law
31 enforcement, social services, mental health services, substance abuse services, public
32 schools, parks and recreation, service corps, community health centers, parenting
33 initiatives for education, and dispute settlement center; and

34 Whereas, CHOICE and Durham Impact have been recognized as programs of
35 excellence by the Greater Triangle Community Foundations and by the the national
36 media as model programs for the entire county; and

37 Whereas, currently, CHOICE and Durham Impact rely on donations and grant
38 proposals and require direct State funds to continue to provide services to Durham's
39 youth; and

40 Whereas, Durham Companions programs provide innovative, cost-effective
41 prevention and intervention strategies that have proven successful; and

42 Whereas, Durham County is facing, if left unchecked, a population of
43 children with no resources, sentenced even by kindergarten age to live out lives of

1 criminal activity, academic under-achievement, unemployment, or incarceration; Now,
2 therefore,

3 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

4 Section 1. There is appropriated from the General Fund to Durham
5 Companions, Inc., a nonprofit organization, the sum of eighty-eight thousand four
6 hundred thirty-two dollars (\$88,432) for the 1994-95 fiscal year to be allocated as
7 follows:

8 (1) \$51,432 for The Coalition for Holistic Opportunities in Children's
9 Education; and

10 (2) \$37,000 for the Durham Impact program.

11 The Department of Human Resources, Division of Youth Services, and the Department
12 of Public Instruction may provide monitoring and technical assistance for these
13 programs.

14 Sec. 2. This act becomes effective July 1, 1994.