## GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA

## SESSION 1999

H 1

## HOUSE BILL 1311

Short Title: Hamlet Opera House/RR Museum Funds.	(Public)
Sponsors: Representative Goodwin.	
Referred to: Appropriations.	

## April 22, 1999

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

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AN ACT TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS FOR THE HAMLET OPERA HOUSE AND THE HAMLET RAILROAD MUSEUM.

Whereas, renovation of the Hamlet Opera House and the Hamlet Railroad Museum is an important part of Hamlet's downtown revitalization efforts and overall economic development; and

Whereas, using the renovated Opera House as a meeting facility and cultural and entertainment center for all residents of Richmond and surrounding counties will assist in the promotion of the City of Hamlet as an antique mecca drawing people to the City of Hamlet from northern South Carolina and south central North Carolina; and

Whereas, the Opera House (placed on the National Register of Historic Places as part of the Main Street Commercial Historic District on March 19, 1992) will be an educational resource for students, teaching them about the City of Hamlet's history, music, architecture, arts, and culture; and

Whereas, the Hamlet Railroad Museum, located in the old Seaboard station near the Opera House, provides visitors with a vast array of railroad memorabilia; and

Whereas, in 1990 the City of Hamlet was voted an "All American City", and her past glory as a railroad hub was briefly recaptured when its amazing intact collection of early twentieth century commercial architecture was showcased in the filming of the movie "Billy Bathgate"; and

Whereas, in September 1991 a tragic fire at the Imperial Food's chicken plant killed 25 people; tragedy struck again in 1992 when the landmark Terminal Hotel was completely destroyed by an arsonist; Richmond County is one of the most economically distressed counties in the State; but from all this has come a determination to flourish; and

Whereas, the City of Hamlet is the current owner of the Opera House (which was purchased with funds raised by the Seaboard Festival Day, Inc.), and the city actively assists with the daily operations and maintenance of this property with the Board of Directors of the Seaboard Festival Day, Inc.; and

Whereas, the City of Hamlet pledges financial support to the continuing efforts to make the Opera House and Railroad Museum successful; Now, therefore,

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

Section 1. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the City of Hamlet the sum of two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000) for the 1999-2000 fiscal year to be allocated as follows:

- (1) \$100,000 to repair the roof of the Hamlet Opera House in order to save the structure from further deterioration.
- (2) \$100,000 for repairs and maintenance of the Hamlet Railroad Museum. Section 2. This act becomes effective July 1, 1999.

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