

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2001**

**SENATE BILL 9
RATIFIED BILL**

**AN ACT TO APPOINT MEMBERS TO THE VIRGINIA-NORTH CAROLINA
INTERSTATE HIGH-SPEED RAIL COMMISSION.**

Whereas, levels of congestion on interstate highways and at major airports along the east coast of the United States are rapidly rising, and in some locations have reached virtual gridlock for hours each day; and

Whereas, it is therefore necessary to develop and use alternative modes of transportation for the movement of goods and passengers long distances along the east-coast corridor; and

Whereas, preliminary engineering studies have documented that the creation of high-speed passenger rail service between points in Virginia and points in North Carolina could provide travelers along the corridor with an attractive alternative to highway travel, thus reducing highway congestion; and

Whereas, establishment of high-speed passenger rail service between Virginia and North Carolina offers the additional possibility of connection through the District of Columbia to origins and destinations as far north as New England; and

Whereas, establishment of high-speed passenger rail service between Virginia and North Carolina offers the additional possibility of connections to destinations in the South, including Florida, Greenville-Spartanburg, South Carolina, and Atlanta, Georgia; and

Whereas, the Virginia General Assembly by passage of Senate Joint Resolution 396 of the 2001 Session has taken its action to create the Virginia-North Carolina Interstate High-Speed Rail Commission; and

Whereas, it is useful and prudent to have a panel of legislators from both Virginia and North Carolina established in order to explore the benefits, costs, and required legislative actions associated with establishing high-speed passenger rail service; Now, therefore,

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. Upon the Virginia General Assembly's concurring action, the Virginia-North Carolina Interstate High-Speed Rail Commission is established. The North Carolina component shall consist of six members to be appointed as follows:

- (1) Three members of the House of Representatives to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives; and
- (2) Three members of the Senate to be appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate.

SECTION 2. In conducting its study, the Commission shall hold meetings, tours of inspection, and public hearings as appropriate to determine the desirability and feasibility of establishing high-speed passenger rail service between Virginia and North Carolina. If it appears to the Commission that establishment of such service is desirable and feasible, the Commission shall consider and recommend to the Governor and General Assembly those legislative actions necessary to do so, including the identification of the necessary levels of funding and the sources of those funds.

SECTION 3. Upon approval of the Legislative Services Commission, the Legislative Services Officer shall assign professional and clerical staff to assist in the

work of the Commission. Technical support shall be provided by the Rail Division of the Department of Transportation. Clerical staff shall be furnished to the Commission through the offices of the House of Representatives and Senate Supervisors of Clerks. The Commission may meet in the Legislative Building or the Legislative Office Building upon the approval of the Legislative Services Commission. The North Carolina members of the Commission, while in the discharge of official duties, may exercise all the powers provided under the provisions of G.S. 120-19 through G.S. 120-19.4, including the power to request all officers, agents, agencies, and departments of the State to provide any information, data, or documents within their possession, ascertainable from their records, or otherwise available to them, and the power to subpoena witnesses. North Carolina members of the Commission shall receive per diem, subsistence, and travel allowances as follows:

- (1) Commission members who are members of the General Assembly at the rate established in G.S. 120-3.1;
- (2) Commission members who are officials or employees of the State or of local government agencies at the rate established in G.S. 138-6; and
- (3) All other Commission members at the rate established in G.S. 138-5.

SECTION 4. The Commission shall report its findings and any recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly by October 20, 2002, and may make an interim report to the Governor and General Assembly upon the convening of the 2002 Regular Session of the 2001 General Assembly.

SECTION 5. From funds appropriated to the General Assembly, the Legislative Services Commission shall allocate funds for the expenses of the Interstate High-Speed Rail Commission.

SECTION 6. This act is effective when it becomes law.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 25th day of June, 2001.

Beverly E. Perdue
President of the Senate

James B. Black
Speaker of the House of Representatives

Michael F. Easley
Governor

Approved _____ .m. this _____ day of _____, 2001