

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2005**

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SENATE BILL 1986

Short Title: Western NC Clusters of Innovation Funds.

(Public)

Sponsors: Senator Snow.

Referred to: Appropriations/Base Budget.

May 26, 2006

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1 AN ACT FOR THE PROMOTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF AND ATTRACTION
2 TO WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA OF NEW BUSINESSES THROUGH
3 CLUSTERS OF INNOVATION PURSUANT TO THE REGION'S FIVE-YEAR
4 VISION PLAN.
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6 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

7 **SECTION 1.** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the
8 Department of Commerce the sum of seven hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$750,000)
9 for the 2006-2007 fiscal year to establish a comprehensive marketing and brand
10 awareness initiative to leverage private and federal funds for the purpose of promoting
11 the business climate in Western North Carolina and creating and growing new jobs.

12 **SECTION 2.** The funds appropriated under this act shall be used to build
13 national and international awareness of the quality of the business climate in Western
14 North Carolina for the purposes of attracting new-economy jobs through the 10 clusters
15 of innovation identified in the region's Five-Year Vision Plan, a collaboration between
16 three State universities, 11 community colleges, six private colleges, local economic
17 development commissions, and tourism leaders.

18 **SECTION 3.** The funds appropriated under this act shall be matched by the
19 Western North Carolina Regional Economic Development Commission through private
20 investments, federal allocations for the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area (designated
21 by Congress in 2003 as the nation's 24th national heritage area), and local governments.

22 **SECTION 4.** The funds shall be used expressly by the Western North
23 Carolina Regional Economic Development Commission with oversight from the
24 Department of Commerce.

25 **SECTION 5.** The Western North Carolina Regional Economic Development
26 Commission and the Department of Commerce shall report during the 2007 General
27 Assembly to the Senate Appropriations Committee on Natural and Economic Resources
28 and the House of Representative Appropriations Subcommittee on Natural and
29 Economic Resources on the use of funds appropriated under this act.

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SECTION 6. This act becomes effective July 1, 2006.