

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2015

HOUSE BILL 550  
RATIFIED BILL

AN ACT TO AUTHORIZE OWNERSHIP OF SERVICE ANIMALS OWNED BY THE STATE OR A UNIT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT TO BE TRANSFERRED TO THE SERVICE ANIMAL'S HANDLER OR OTHER SPECIFIED PERSONS UPON THE SERVICE ANIMAL'S RETIREMENT FROM PUBLIC SERVICE.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

**SECTION 1.** Article 4 of Chapter 20 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

**"§ 20-187.4. Disposition of retired service animals.**

(a) Upon determination that any service animal is no longer fit or needed for public service, the State or unit of local government may transfer ownership of the animal at a price determined by the State or unit of local government and upon any other terms and conditions as the State or unit of local government deems appropriate, to any of the following individuals, if that individual agrees to accept ownership, care, and custody of the service animal:

- (1) The officer or employee who had normal custody and control of the service animal during the service animal's public service to the State or unit of local government.
- (2) A surviving spouse, or in the event such officer or employee dies unsurvived by a spouse, surviving children of the officer or employee killed in the line of duty who had normal custody and control of the service animal during the service animal's public service to the State or unit of local government.
- (3) An organization or program dedicated to the assistance or support of service animals retired from public service.

(b) For purposes of this section, the following definitions apply:

- (1) "Service animal." – Any horse, dog, or other animal owned by the State or a unit of local government that performs law enforcement, public safety, or emergency service functions.
- (2) "Unit of local government." – As defined in G.S. 159-7(b)(15)."



**SECTION 2.** This act is effective October 1, 2016.  
In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 1<sup>st</sup> day of July, 2016.

s/ Philip E. Berger  
President Pro Tempore of the Senate

s/ Tim Moore  
Speaker of the House of Representatives

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Pat McCrory  
Governor

Approved \_\_\_\_\_m. this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2016