

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA

SESSION 1989

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SENATE BILL 631
Second Edition Engrossed 4/18/89

Short Title: Migrant Housing Law Changes.

(Public)

Sponsors: Senators Speed, Bryan; Ballance, Barker, Basnight, Block, Carpenter, Cochrane, Conder, Daniel, Daughtry, Ezzell, Guy, Harris, Hunt of Moore, Johnson of Cabarrus, Johnson of Wake, Kincaid, Martin of Pitt, Martin of Guilford, Murphy, Parnell, Plyler, Rauch, Raynor, Sands, Sherron, Smith, Soles, Staton, Swain, Taft, Tally, Walker, and Ward.

Referred to: Agriculture.

March 23, 1989

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT TO CONSOLIDATE THE REGULATION OF MIGRANT HOUSING
3 WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND TO ESTABLISH STANDARDS
4 AND ENFORCEMENT PROVISIONS FOR THE REGULATION OF MIGRANT
5 HOUSING.

6 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

7 Section 1. Part 5 of Article 8 of Chapter 130A of the General Statutes is
8 repealed.

9 Sec. 2. Chapter 95 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new
10 Article to read:

11 **“ARTICLE 19.**

12 **“MIGRANT HOUSING ACT OF NORTH CAROLINA.**

13 **“§ 95-222. Short title; legislative purpose.**

14 (a) This Article may be cited as the ‘Migrant Housing Act of North Carolina.’

15 (b) It is the purpose and policy of the General Assembly to conform migrant
16 housing standards to, as much as reasonably possible, the Occupational Safety and
17 Health Act of North Carolina, and to ensure safe and healthy migrant housing
18 conditions. The General Assembly finds that the general welfare of the State requires
19 the enactment of this law under the police power of the State.

"§ 95-223. Definitions.

As used in this Article, unless the context requires otherwise:

- (1) 'Agricultural employment' means employment in any service or activity included within the provisions of Section 3(f) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, or section 3121(g) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986; and the handling, planting, drying, packing, packaging, processing, freezing, or grading prior to delivery for storage of any agricultural or horticultural commodity in its unmanufactured state and including the harvesting of Christmas trees;
- (2) 'Commissioner' means the Commissioner of Labor of North Carolina;
- (3) 'Day' means a calendar day;
- (4) 'Established federal standard' means those standards as set out in, and interpretations issued by, the Secretary of the United States Department of Labor in 29 C.F.R. 1910.142, as amended;
- (5) 'Migrant' means an individual, and his dependents, who is employed in agricultural employment of a seasonal or other temporary nature, and who is required to be absent overnight from his permanent place of residence;
- (6) 'Migrant housing' means any facility, structure, real property, or other unit that is established, operated, or used as living quarters for migrants;
- (7) 'Operator' means any person who owns or controls migrant housing; and
- (8) 'Person' means an individual, partnership, association, joint stock company, corporation, trust, or legal representative;
- (9) 'Substantive violation' means a violation of a safety and health standard, including those that provide fire prevention, and adequate and sanitary supply of water, plumbing maintenance, structurally sound construction of buildings, effective maintenance of those buildings, provision of adequate heat as weather conditions require, and reasonable protection for inhabitants from insects and rodents. A substantive violation does not include technical or procedural violations of safety and health standards.

"§ 95-224. Scope.

The provisions of this Article shall apply to all operators and migrants except:

- (1) Any person who, in the ordinary course of that person's business, regularly provides housing on a commercial basis to the general public; and who provides housing to migrants of the same character and on the same or comparable terms and conditions as those provided to the general public; or
- (2) A housing unit owned by one or more of the occupants and occupied solely by a family unit.

"§ 95-225. Adoption of standards and interpretations.

1 (a) Unless otherwise provided, all established federal standards are adopted and
2 shall be enforced by the Department of Labor of North Carolina.

3 (b) The Commissioner shall provide for publication in the North Carolina
4 Register any modification by the federal government of the established federal
5 standards within 30 days of their adoption.

6 (c) For the protection of the public health, the Commission for Health Services
7 shall adopt and the Department of Human Resources shall enforce rules that establish
8 water quality and water sanitation standards for migrant housing under this Article.

9 (d) The requirements for the collection, treatment, and disposal of sewage, as
10 provided in Article 11 of Chapter 130A, and the rules adopted pursuant to that Article
11 shall apply to migrant housing.

12 (e) Whenever the outside temperature falls below 50 degrees Fahrenheit and the
13 migrant housing is occupied, heating equipment shall be provided and operable.
14 Regardless of outside temperature, this equipment must be capable of maintaining living
15 areas at 65 degrees Fahrenheit. If housing is to be occupied from May 15 until
16 September 1 only, no heating equipment shall be required at the time of preoccupancy
17 inspection.

18 (f) All migrant housing shall comply with the standards regarding fire safety for
19 migrant housing as adopted by the Commission for Health Services and in effect on
20 January 1, 1989.

21 (g) For purposes of this Article, the established federal standard provided in 29
22 C.F.R. 1910.142(i) does not apply. The following standards shall apply to migrant
23 housing:

24 (1) Food preparation facilities and eating areas shall be provided and
25 maintained in a clean and sanitary manner;

26 (2) A kitchen facility shall be provided with an operable stove with at least
27 one burner per five people, and in no event with less than two burners;
28 an operable refrigerator with .75 cubic feet per person minimum; a
29 table; and a sink with running hot and cold water;

30 (3) Surfaces with which food or drink come in contact shall be easily
31 accessible for cleaning, and shall be nontoxic, resistant to corrosion,
32 nonabsorbent, and free of open crevices;

33 (4) Acceptable storage facilities shall be provided and shall be kept clean
34 and free of vermin; and

35 (5) All food service facilities, other than those where migrants procure and
36 prepare food for their own or their family's consumption, shall comply
37 with the standards regarding kitchen and dining room facilities for
38 migrant housing, as adopted by the Commission for Health Services
39 and in effect on January 1, 1989.

40 **"§ 95-226. Application for inspection.**

41 (a) Every operator shall request a preoccupancy inspection at least 45 days prior
42 to the anticipated date of occupancy by applying directly to the Department of Labor of
43 North Carolina or to the local health department. Upon receipt of an application by the
44 Department of Labor of North Carolina, the Department of Labor of North Carolina

1 shall immediately notify, in writing, the appropriate local health department; and the
2 local health department shall inspect the migrant housing for compliance with G.S. 95-
3 225(c) and (d). Upon receipt of the application by the local health department, the local
4 health department shall immediately notify, in writing, the Department of Labor of
5 North Carolina and shall inspect the migrant housing for compliance with G.S. 95-
6 225(c) and (d).

7 The local health department shall forward the results of its inspection to the
8 Department of Labor of North Carolina and to the operator. The Department of Labor
9 of North Carolina shall inspect the migrant housing and certify to the operator the
10 results of the inspection.

11 (b) The Department of Labor of North Carolina shall provide local health
12 departments and Agricultural Extension offices with blank copies of forms for applying
13 for preoccupancy inspections.

14 (c) The application for inspection shall include:

15 (1) The name, address, and telephone number of the operator;

16 (2) The location of the migrant housing;

17 (3) The anticipated number of migrants to be housed in the migrant
18 housing; and

19 (4) The anticipated dates of occupancy of the migrant housing.

20 (d) Except as provided in subsection (e) of this section, an operator may allow
21 the migrant housing to be occupied only if the migrant housing has been certified by the
22 Department of Labor of North Carolina or the United States Department of Labor to be
23 in compliance with all of the standards under this Article, except that an operator may
24 allow migrant housing to be occupied on a provisional basis if the operator applied for a
25 preoccupancy inspection at least 45 days prior to occupancy and the preoccupancy
26 inspection was not conducted by the Department of Labor of North Carolina at least
27 four days prior to the anticipated occupancy. Upon subsequent inspection by the
28 Department of Labor of North Carolina, such provisional occupancy shall be revoked if
29 any deficiencies have not been corrected within the period of time specified by the
30 Department of Labor of North Carolina, or within two days after receipt of written
31 notice provided on-site to the operator. No penalties may be assessed for any violation
32 of this Article which are found during the preoccupancy inspection, unless substantive
33 violations exist during provisional occupancy.

34 (e) If an operator has applied for an inspection pursuant to this Article and one or
35 more migrants arrives in advance of the arrival date stated in the application, the
36 operator shall notify the Department of Labor of North Carolina within two working
37 days of the occupancy of the migrant housing.

38 **§ 95-227. Enforcement.**

39 For the purpose of enforcing the standards provided by this Article, the provisions of
40 G.S. 95-129, G.S. 95-130 and G.S. 95-136 through G.S. 95-142 shall apply under this
41 Article in a similar manner as they apply to places of employment under OSHANC;
42 however, G.S. 95-129(4), 95-130(2) and (6), and 95-137(b)(4) do not apply to migrant
43 housing. For the purposes of this Article, the term:

- 1 (1) 'Employer' in G.S. 95-129, G.S. 95-130 and G.S. 95-136 through G.S.
2 95-142 shall be construed to mean an operator;
3 (2) 'Employee' shall be construed to mean a migrant; and
4 (3) 'Director' shall mean the agent designated by the Commissioner to
5 assist in the administration of this Article.

6 The Commissioner may establish a new division to enforce this Article.

7 **"§ 95-228. Waiver of rights.**

8 Agreements entered into by migrants to waive or to modify their rights under this
9 Article shall be deemed void as contrary to public policy. A waiver or modification of
10 rights by the Department of Labor of North Carolina shall be valid under this Article.

11 **"§ 95-229. Construction of Article; severability.**

12 This Article shall be liberally construed to the end that the safety and health of the
13 migrants of this State may be effectuated and protected.

14 The provisions of this Article are severable, and if any provision of this Article is
15 held invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the invalidity may not affect other
16 provisions of the Article, which can be given effect without the invalid provision."

17 Sec. 3. The Commissioner of Labor shall publish the standards regarding fire
18 safety for migrant housing adopted by the Commission for Health Services, in effect on
19 January 1, 1989, within 30 days after Section 2 of this act becomes effective. The
20 Commissioner of Labor shall publish the standards regarding kitchen and dining room
21 facilities for migrant housing adopted by the Commission for Health Services, in effect
22 on January 1, 1989, within 30 days after Section 2 of this act becomes effective.

23 Sec. 4. In lieu of the provisions of G.S. 130A-239 and any rules adopted
24 pursuant to that section relating to water supply quantity and relating to heat, the
25 Department of Human Resources shall apply those standards relating to water supply
26 quantity and relating to heat established in G.S. 95-225 as enacted by Section 2 of this
27 act, even if Section 2 of this act has not become effective, to all migrant housing
28 permitted by the Department of Human Resources.

29 Sec. 5. If funds are appropriated for the 1989-90 fiscal year to implement the
30 provisions of Sections 1, 2, and 3 of this act, Sections 1, 2, and 3 of this act shall
31 become effective January 1, 1990. This act shall not be construed to obligate the
32 General Assembly to make any appropriation to implement the provisions of this act. If
33 funds are not appropriated for the 1989-90 fiscal year to implement the provisions of
34 Sections 1, 2, and 3 of this act, Sections 1, 2, and 3 of this act shall not become
35 effective. Section 4 of this act is effective upon ratification and shall apply only to the
36 1989 growing season, but shall remain in effect for subsequent growing seasons if funds
37 are not appropriated to implement Sections 1, 2, and 3 of this act.