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HOUSE DRH50563-LH-179 (3/18)

Short Title: Study Project Graduate. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Lucas, Bell, and Yongue (Primary Sponsors).

Referred to:

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO ESTABLISH THE JOINT LEGISLATIVE STUDY COMMITTEE ON PROJECT GRADUATE AND TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO IMPLEMENT THE STUDY.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. There is created the Joint Legislative Study Committee on Project Graduate. The Committee shall consist of 12 members. The Speaker of the House of Representatives shall appoint six members, and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate shall appoint six members.

The Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate shall each appoint a cochair for the Committee. The Committee may meet at any time upon the joint call of the cochairs. Vacancies on the Committee shall be filled by the same appointing authority as made the initial appointment.

The Committee, while in the discharge of its official duties, may exercise all powers provided for under G.S. 120-19 and G.S. 120-19.1 through G.S. 120-19.4. The Committee may contract for professional, clerical, or consultant services as provided by G.S. 120-32.02.

Subject to the approval of the Legislative Services Commission, the Committee may meet in the Legislative Building or the Legislative Office Building. The Legislative Services Commission, through the Legislative Services Officer, shall assign professional staff to assist the Committee in its work. The House of Representatives' and the Senate's Director of Legislative Assistants shall assign clerical staff to the Committee, and the expenses relating to the clerical employees shall be borne by the Committee. Members of the Committee shall receive subsistence and travel expenses at the rates set forth in G.S. 120-3.1, 138-5, or 138-6, as appropriate.

SECTION 2. The Committee shall identify the number of adults in North Carolina who have credit hours at a State institution of higher education but who have not earned a bachelor's degree. The Committee shall consider initiatives, incentives, and methods to recruit these adults back to college to complete their degree. In its study the Committee shall focus particularly on Kentucky's Project Graduate and the initiatives that the Kentucky program has implemented to recruit adults to return to college to complete the requirements for a baccalaureate degree. In its study the Committee may also consider how providing the following for each State university would help targeted students graduate:

(1) Tuition assistance.



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A degree audit program showing the student exactly which courses are (2) needed to complete the degree in the student's initial field of study or in another discipline.

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Providing academic advisers trained to assist an adult student with course (3) scheduling and to explain requirements and university procedures.

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(4) A simplified application for readmission and waiver of the usual application fee.

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(5) Early admission and registration.

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Establishing an adult resource center on campus and providing adult student (6) services.

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In addition, the Committee may consider any other issues that are relevant to designing and implementing a statewide college access initiative for adults and may consider any other issues relevant to this study.

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SECTION 3. The Committee may make an interim report, including any legislative recommendations, to the 2009 General Assembly, 2010 Regular Session, and shall submit a final report, including any legislative recommendations, to the 2011 General Assembly. The Committee shall terminate upon filing its final report or upon the convening of the 2011 General Assembly, whichever is earlier.

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SECTION 4. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the General Assembly the sum of twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) for the 2009-2010 fiscal year and the sum of twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) for the 2010-2011 fiscal year to be allocated to the Legislative Services Commission and used to fund the work of the Committee established by this act.

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SECTION 5. This act becomes effective July 1, 2009.

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