GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA **SESSION 2021**

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H.B. 670
Apr 22, 2021
HOUSE PRINCIPAL CLERK
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HOUSE BILL DRH10275-NDf-47

	Short Title:	Enact Criminal Justice Debt Reform.	(Public)
	Sponsors:	Representative Alston.	
	Referred to:		
1			
1		A BILL TO BE ENTITLED PROMOTE CRIMINAL JUSTICE DEBT REFORM.	
2 3			
3 4	The General	Assembly of North Carolina enacts:	
4 5	DADTI DE	STRICTION ON FEDERAL ADOPTION AND EQUITABLE SHA	DINC
6		ECTION 1.(a) Subchapter I of Article 1 of Chapter 14 of the General	
7		adding a new section to read:	Statutes 15
8	•	Restriction on federal adoption and equitable sharing of seized prop	ertv
9		county, or municipal law enforcement agency shall not (i) refer, the	
10		inquish possession of property seized under State law to a federal agency	
11		the seized property or other means by the federal agency for the purp	
12	-	rfeiture under federal law, or (ii) accept payment of any kind or distr	
13		ceeds resulting from a joint task force or other multijurisdictional collabor	
14	·	overnment, if either:	
15	(1		his section
16		does not result in a criminal conviction.	
17	<u>(2</u>		forcement
18		agency does not exceed five thousand dollars (\$5,000)."	
19	SI	ECTION 1.(b) This section is effective when it becomes law and	applies to
20	property refe	rred, transferred, or otherwise relinquished, and forfeiture proceeds recei	ved, on or
21	after that date	е.	
22			
23	PART II.		ORTING
24		DING COURT COSTS AND FEES	
25		ECTION 2.(a) G.S. 7A-304 reads as rewritten:	
26		Costs in criminal actions.	
27		n every criminal case in the superior or district court, wherein the de	
28		enters a plea of guilty or nolo contendere, or when costs are assessed a	-
29		witness, the court shall determine the defendant's ability to pay any cost	
30		en, weighing that determination, assess and collect the following cost	
31		<u>collected.</u> <u>costs.</u> No costs may be assessed when a case is dismissed.	• •
32		itten order, supported by findings of fact and conclusions of law, determ	
33		ause, the court may (i) waive costs assessed under this section or (ii) waive (12)	
34		d under subdivision (7), (8), (8a), (11), (12), or (13) of this section. No-	
35		it all or part of any court fines or costs without providing notice and opp	•
36	be heard by	all government entities directly affected. The court shall provide not	ace to the



1 government entities directly affected of (i) the date and time of the hearing and (ii) the right to

2 be heard and make an objection to the remission or waiver of all or part of the order of court costs

3 at least 15 days prior to hearing. Notice shall be made to the government entities affected by

4 first class mail to the address provided for receipt of court costs paid pursuant to the order. The

- costs referenced in this subsection are listed below:
 ...
 - (6) For support of the General Court of Justice, the sum of two-one hundred dollars (\$200.00) (\$100.00) is payable by a defendant who fails to appear to answer the charge as scheduled, unless within 20 days after the scheduled appearance, the person either appears in court to answer the charge or disposes of the charge pursuant to G.S. 7A-146, and the sum of fifty dollars (\$50.00) is payable by a defendant who fails to pay a fine, penalty, or costs within 40 days of the date specified in the court's judgment. The fee for failure to appear shall only be collected once in a criminal case. Upon a showing to the court that the defendant failed to appear because of an error or omission of a judicial official, a prosecutor, or a law-enforcement officer, the court shall waive the fee for failure to appear. These fees shall be remitted to the State Treasurer.
- (7) For the services of the North Carolina State Crime Laboratory facilities, the district or superior court judge shall, upon conviction, order payment of the costs actually incurred for the services, not to exceed the sum of six hundred dollars (\$600.00) (\$600.00), to be remitted to the Department of Justice for support of the Laboratory. This cost shall be assessed only in cases in which, as part of the investigation leading to the defendant's conviction, the laboratories have performed DNA analysis of the crime, tests of bodily fluids of the defendant for the presence of alcohol or controlled substances, or analysis of any controlled substance possessed by the defendant or the defendant's agent.
 - (8) For the services of any crime laboratory facility, the district or superior court judge shall, upon conviction, order payment of the <u>costs actually incurred for the services, not to exceed the sum of six hundred dollars (\$600.00) (\$600.00)</u>, to be remitted to the general fund of the local governmental unit that operates the laboratory or paid for the laboratory services. The funds shall be used for law enforcement purposes. The cost shall be assessed only in cases in which, as part of the investigation leading to the defendant's conviction, the laboratory has performed DNA analysis of the crime, test of bodily fluids of the defendant for the presence of alcohol or controlled substances, or analysis of any controlled substance possessed by the defendant or the defendant's agent. The costs shall be assessed only if the same kind of work performed at the laboratory is the equivalent of the same kind of work performed by the North Carolina State Crime Laboratory under subdivision (7) of this subsection.
 - (8a) For the services of any private hospital performing toxicological testing under contract with a prosecutorial district, the district or superior court judge shall, upon conviction, order payment of the costs actually incurred for the services, not to exceed the sum of six hundred dollars (\$600.00) -(\$600.00), to be remitted to the State Treasurer for the support of the General Court of Justice. The cost shall be assessed only in cases in which, as part of the investigation leading to the defendant's conviction, the laboratory has performed testing of bodily fluids of the defendant for the presence of alcohol or controlled substances. The costs shall be assessed only if the court finds that the work performed by the local hospital is the equivalent of the same kind of work

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1 2 3		performed by the North Carolina State Crime Laboratory (7) of this subsection.	under subdivision
4 5 6	 (9a)	For the services of the North Carolina State Crime Labor district or superior court judge shall, upon conviction, or costs actually incurred for the services, not to exceed the services.	der payment of the sum of six hundred
7 8		dollars (\$600.00) (\$600.00), to be remitted to the Departm used for laboratory purposes. This cost shall be assessed	d only in cases in
9 10 11		which, as part of the investigation leading to the defendar laboratories have performed digital forensics, including the imaging, and acquisition and analysis of digital media.	
11 12 13	(9b)	For the services of any crime laboratory facility, the district judge shall, upon conviction, order payment of the <u>costs ac</u>	1
14 15		the services, not to exceed the sum of six hundred dollars (\$ to be remitted to the general fund of the local law enfor	600.00) <u>(</u>\$600.00),
16 17		operates the laboratory or paid for the laboratory services. used for laboratory services. The cost shall be assessed of	
18 19		which, as part of the investigation leading to the defendant laboratory has performed digital forensics, including the	
20 21		imaging, and acquisition and analysis of digital media, a finds that the work performed at the laboratory is the equi	
22 23		kind of work performed by the North Carolina State Crime subdivision (9a) of this subsection.	e Laboratory under
24 25 26	 (11)	For the services of an expert witness employed by the No	
20 27 28		Crime Laboratory who completes a chemical anal G.S. 20-139.1, a forensic analysis pursuant to G.S. 8-5 forensics analysis and provides testimony about that analy	8.20, or a digital
29 30		trial, the district or superior court judge shall, upon defendant, order payment of the <u>costs actually incurred for</u>	conviction of the
31 32		exceed the sum of six hundred dollars (\$600.00)-(\$600.00) the Department of Justice for support of the State Crime La	<u>), to be remitted to</u>
33 34		shall be assessed only in cases in which the expert witness about the chemical or forensic analysis in the defendant's t	trial and shall be in
35 36	(12)	addition to any cost assessed under subdivision (7) or (9a) For the services of an expert witness employed by a crir	ne laboratory who
37 38		completes a chemical analysis pursuant to G.S. 20-139.1, pursuant to G.S. 8-58.20, or a digital forensics analy	ysis and provides
39 40 41		testimony about that analysis in a defendant's trial, the distri- judge shall, upon conviction of the defendant, order pay actually incurred for the services not to exceed the sum of	ment of the <u>costs</u>
41 42 43		<u>actually incurred for the services, not to exceed the sum of a (\$600.00) (\$600.00)</u> , to be remitted to the general f governmental unit that operates the laboratory or paid	fund of the local
44 45		services. The funds shall be used for laboratory services. assessed only in cases in which the expert witness provide	This cost shall be
46 47		the chemical or forensic analysis in the defendant's tria addition to any cost assessed under subdivision (8) or (9b)	al and shall be in
48 49	(13)	For the services of an expert witness employed by performing toxicological testing under contract with a pr	a private hospital
50 51		who completes a chemical analysis pursuant to G.S. 20-1 testimony about that analysis in a defendant's trial, the distri	39.1 and provides

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1 2 3 4 5 6	judge shall, upon conviction of the defendant, order p actually incurred for the services, not to exceed the sum o (\$600.00) (\$600.00), to be remitted to the State Treasur the General Court of Justice. This cost shall be assessed o the expert witness provides testimony about the chem defendant's trial and shall be in addition to any cost assess	f six hundred dollars er for the support of nly in cases in which nical analysis in the
7	(8a) of this subsection.	
8		2010 1 11
9 10	(a2) The Administrative Office of the Courts shall report on October 1 thereafter to the Joint Lagislative Overright Committee on Justice and J	· · · ·
10 11	thereafter, to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Justice and I implementation of the notice of waiver of costs to the government entities	•
11	required by subsection (a) of this section.	Guneeny anected as
12		
13	(f) The court may allow a defendant owing monetary obligations	under this section to
15	either make payment in full when costs are assessed or make payment on	
16	arranged with the court. Defendants making use of an installment plan shall	
17	fee of twenty dollars (\$20.00) to cover the additional costs to the court of rece	
18	installment payments. Fees collected under this subsection shall be remitted t	0 0
19	for support of the General Court of Justice.	
20	"	
21	SECTION 2.(b) G.S. 7A-350 is repealed.	
22	SECTION 2.(c) This section is effective when it becomes law	and applies to costs
23	and fees assessed on or after that date.	
24		
25	PART III. CLARIFY LANGUAGE TO PRECLUDE IMPRI NONDA VAMENT OF FINES AND FEES WHEN A CTIVE SENTENCI	
26 27	NONPAYMENT OF FINES AND FEES WHEN ACTIVE SENTENCE SECTION 3.(a) G.S. 15A-1364(a) reads as rewritten:	LIMPUSED
27	"(a) Response to Default. – When a defendant who has been required	to nav a fine or costs
20 29	or both defaults in payment or in any installment, the court, upon the moti	
30	or upon its own motion, may require the defendant to appear and show caus	
31	be imprisoned or may rely upon a conditional show cause order entered under	
32	If the defendant fails to appear, an order for his arrest may be issued. This	subsection shall not
33	apply to a defendant who has received an active sentence in the same case in	which the defendant
34	has defaulted on the payment of a fine or costs."	
35	SECTION 3.(b) G.S. 15A-1365 reads as rewritten:	
36	"§ 15A-1365. Judgment for fines docketed; lien and execution.	
37	When a defendant has defaulted in payment of a fine or costs, the judg	•
38	judgment be docketed. Upon being docketed, the judgment becomes a lien	
39 40	the defendant in the same manner as do judgments in civil actions. Executively judgments may be stayed only when an appeal is taken and security is given	
40 41	cases. If the judgment is affirmed on appeal to the appellate division, the	
42	court, on receipt of the certificate from the appellate division, must issue	_
43	judgment. The clerk may not issue an execution, however, if the fine or cos	
44	an offense other than trafficking in controlled substances or conspiring to	-
45	substances under G.S. 90-95(h) and (i), respectively, and the defendant	
46	suspended sentence, if any, or serve a term of 30 days, if no suspended sent	
47	serving an active sentence."	- —
48		
49	PART IV. MODIFY THE LAWS GOVERNING THE REVOCATION	ON OF DRIVERS
50	LICENSES FOR FAILURE TO PAY FINE, PENALTY, OR COSTS	
51	SECTION 4.(a) G.S. 20-24.1 is repealed.	

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SECTION 4.(b) G.S. 20-24.2 is repealed.
SECTION 4.(c) Article 2 of Chapter 20 of the General Statutes is amended by adding
a new section to read:
"§ 20-24.3. Prohibition on revocation issued solely for failure to appear or pay fine, penalty,
<u>or costs.</u>
Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Division shall not revoke the drivers license
of a person charged with an infraction, misdemeanor, or felony if the revocation is solely for one
or both of the following reasons:
(1) The person failed to appear, after being notified to do so, when the case was
called for a trial or hearing.
(2) The person failed to pay a fine, penalty, or court costs ordered by the court."
SECTION 4.(d) G.S. 15A-1116(a) reads as rewritten:
"(a) Use of Contempt or Fine Collection Procedures: Notification of DMV. – If the person
does not comply with a sanction ordered by the court, the court may proceed in accordance with
Chapter 5A of the General Statutes. If the person fails to pay a penalty or costs, the court may
proceed in accordance with Article 84 of this Chapter. If the infraction is a motor vehicle
infraction, the court must report a failure to pay the applicable penalty and costs to the Division of Motor Vahialas as apacified in C.S. 20.24.2."
of Motor Vehicles as specified in G.S. 20-24.2."
SECTION 4.(e) G.S. 20-13.2(e) reads as rewritten:"(e) Before the Division restores a driver's license that has been suspended or revoked
under any provision of this Article, other than G.S. 20-24.1, the person seeking to have his
driver's license restored shall submit to the Division proof that he has notified his insurance agent
or company of his seeking the restoration and that he is financially responsible. Proof of financial
responsibility shall be in one of the following forms:
responsibility shall be in one of the following forms.
The preceding provisions of this subsection do not apply to applicants who do not own
currently registered motor vehicles and who do not operate nonfleet private passenger motor
vehicles that are owned by other persons and that are not insured under commercial motor vehicle
liability insurance policies. In such cases, the applicant shall sign a written certificate to that
effect. Such certificate shall be furnished by the Division and may be incorporated into the
restoration application form. Any material misrepresentation made by such person on such
certificate shall be grounds for suspension of that person's license for a period of 90 days.
For the purposes of this subsection, the term "nonfleet private passenger motor vehicle" has
the definition ascribed to it in Article 40 of General Statute Chapter 58.
The Commissioner may require that certificates required by this subsection be on a form
approved by the Commissioner. The financial responsibility required by this subsection shall be
kept in effect for not less than three years after the date that the license is restored. Failure to
maintain financial responsibility as required by this subsection shall be grounds for suspending
the restored driver's license for a period of thirty (30) days. Nothing in this subsection precludes
any person from showing proof of financial responsibility in any other manner authorized by
Articles 9A and 13 of this Chapter."
SECTION 4.(f) G.S. 20-19(k) reads as rewritten:
"(k) Before the Division restores a driver's license that has been suspended or revoked
under G.S. 20-138.5(d), or under any provision of this Article, other than G.S. 20-24.1, the
person seeking to have his driver's license restored shall submit to the Division proof that he has
notified his insurance agent or company of his seeking the restoration and that he is financially
responsible. Proof of financial responsibility shall be in one of the following forms:
The preceding provisions of this subsection do not apply to applicants who do not own
venicies that are owned by other persons and that are not insured under commercial motor vehicle
currently registered motor vehicles and who do not operate nonfleet private passenger motor vehicles that are owned by other persons and that are not insured under commercial motor vehicles

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liability insurance policies. In such cases, the applicant shall sign a written certificate to that 1 2 effect. Such certificate shall be furnished by the Division and may be incorporated into the 3 restoration application form. Any material misrepresentation made by such person on such 4 certificate shall be grounds for suspension of that person's license for a period of 90 days. 5 For the purposes of this subsection, the term "nonfleet private passenger motor vehicle" has 6 the definition ascribed to it in Article 40 of General Statute Chapter 58. 7 The Commissioner may require that certificates required by this subsection be on a form 8 approved by the Commissioner. The financial responsibility required by this subsection shall be 9 kept in effect for not less than three years after the date that the license is restored. Failure to 10 maintain financial responsibility as required by this subsection shall be grounds for suspending the restored driver's license for a period of thirty (30) days. Nothing in this subsection precludes 11 12 any person from showing proof of financial responsibility in any other manner authorized by 13 Articles 9A and 13 of this Chapter." 14 **SECTION 4.(g)** G.S. 20-28.1(a) reads as rewritten: Upon receipt of notice of conviction of any person of a motor vehicle moving offense, 15 "(a) such offense having been committed while such person's driving privilege was in a state of 16 suspension or revocation, the Division shall revoke such person's driving privilege for an 17 18 additional period of time as set forth in subsection (b) hereof. For purposes of this section a 19 violation of G.S. 20-7(a), 20-24.1, G.S. 20-7(a) or 20-28(a) or (a2) shall not be considered a 20 "motor vehicle moving offense" unless the offense occurred in a commercial motor vehicle or 21 the person held a commercial drivers license at the time of the offense." 22 **SECTION 4.(h)** G.S. 20-217(g2) reads as rewritten: 23 "(g2) Pursuant to G.S. 20-54, failure of a person to pay any fine or costs imposed pursuant 24 to this section shall result in the Division withholding the registration renewal of a motor vehicle 25 registered in that person's name. The clerk of superior court in the county in which the case was 26 disposed shall notify the Division of any person who fails to pay a fine or costs imposed pursuant 27 to this section within 40 days of the date specified in the court's judgment, as required by G.S. 20-24.2(a)(2). judgment. The Division shall continue to withhold the registration renewal 28 29 of a motor vehicle until the clerk of superior court notifies the Division that the person has 30 satisfied whichever of the following conditions of G.S. 20-24.1(b) are applicable to the person's 31 case.case: 32 Disposes of the charge in the trial division in which the person failed to appear (1)33 when the case was last called for trial or hearing. 34 Demonstrates to the court that the person is not the person charged with the (2)35 offense. 36 Pays the penalty, fine, or costs ordered by the court. (3) Demonstrates to the court that the person's failure to pay the penalty, fine, or 37 (4) costs was not willful and that the person is making a good-faith effort to pay 38 39 or that the penalty, fine, or costs should be remitted. 40 The provisions of this subsection shall be in addition to any other actions the Division may 41 take to enforce the payment of any fine imposed pursuant to this section." 42 SECTION 4.(i) G.S. 50-13.12(e) reads as rewritten: 43 "(e) An obligor or other person whose licensing privileges are reinstated under this section 44 may provide a copy of the certification set forth in either subsection (c) or (d) to each licensing 45 agency to which the obligor or other person applies for reinstatement of licensing privileges. 46 Upon request of the obligor or other person, the clerk shall mail a copy of the certification to the 47 appropriate licensing board. Upon receipt of a copy of the certification, and the payment of applicable restoration fees, the licensing board shall reinstate the license." 48 49 **SECTION 4.(j)** G.S. 110-142.2(f) reads as rewritten: 50 Upon receipt of certification under subsection (d) or (e) of this section, the Division "(f) of Motor Vehicles shall reinstate the license to operate a motor vehicle in accordance with G.S. 51

20-24.1, upon payment of the restoration fee and shall remove any restriction of the individual's
 motor vehicle registration."

3 **SECTION 4.(k)** Subsection (a) of this section becomes effective October 1, 2021, 4 and shall not affect license revocations issued prior to that date. Subsection (b) of this section 5 becomes effective October 1, 2021, and shall not affect reports sent prior to that date. Subsection 6 (c) of this section becomes effective October 1, 2021, and applies to license revocations on or 7 after that date. Subsection (d) of this section becomes effective October 1, 2021, and shall not 8 apply to reporting prior to that date. Subsections (e) and (f) of this section become effective 9 October 1, 2021, and shall not affect the restoration of drivers licenses suspended or revoked 10 prior to that date. Subsection (g) of this section becomes effective October 1, 2021, and shall not affect the determination of whether a violation of G.S. 20-24.1 prior to that date constituted a 11 12 motor vehicle moving offense. Subsection (h) of this section becomes effective October 1, 2021, 13 and does not apply to registration renewals withheld for a failure to appear in court or a failure 14 to pay fines or costs that occurred prior to that date. Subsections (i) and (j) become effective 15 October 1, 2021, and apply to license reinstatements on or after that date. The remainder of this section is effective when it becomes law. 16

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PART V. CLARIFY THAT A COMMUNITY SERVICE FEE MAY BE WAIVED

SECTION 5. G.S. 143B-708(c) reads as rewritten:

20 "(c) A-Except upon judicial waiver for good cause, a fee of two hundred fifty dollars (\$250.00) shall be paid by all persons who participate in the program or receive services from 21 the program staff. Only one fee may be assessed for each sentencing transaction, even if the 22 23 person is assigned to the program on more than one occasion, or while on deferred prosecution, 24 under a conditional discharge, or serving a sentence for the offense. A sentencing transaction 25 shall include all offenses considered and adjudicated during the same term of court. Fees 26 collected pursuant to this subsection shall be deposited in the General Fund. If the person is 27 convicted in a court in this State, the fee shall be paid to the clerk of court in the county in which 28 the person is convicted, regardless of whether the person is participating in the program as a 29 condition of parole, of probation imposed by the court, or pursuant to the exercise of authority 30 delegated to the probation officer pursuant to G.S. 15A-1343.2(e) or (f). If the person is 31 participating in the program as a result of a conditional discharge or a deferred prosecution or 32 similar program, the fee shall be paid to the clerk of court in the county in which the agreement 33 is filed. Persons participating in the program for any other reason shall pay the fee to the clerk of 34 court in the county in which the services are provided by the program staff. The fee shall be paid 35 in full before the person may participate in the community service program, except that: "

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PART VI. REPEAL COURT COSTS FOR SEAT BELT INFRACTIONS SECTION 6.(a) G.S. 20-135.2A(e) reads as rewritten:

39 40 "(e) Any driver or front seat passenger who fails to wear a seat belt as required by this section shall have committed an infraction and shall pay a penalty of twenty-five dollars and fifty 41 42 cents (\$25.50) plus the following court costs: the General Court of Justice fee provided for in 43 G.S. 7A-304(a)(4), the telephone facilities fee provided for in G.S. 7A-304(a)(2a), and the law 44 enforcement training and certification fee provided for in G.S. 7A-304(a)(3b). and no court costs. 45 Any rear seat occupant of a vehicle who fails to wear a seat belt as required by this section shall 46 have committed an infraction and shall pay a penalty of ten dollars (\$10.00) and no court costs. 47 Court costs assessed under this section are for the support of the General Court of Justice and shall be remitted to the State Treasurer. Conviction of an infraction under this section has no 48 49 other consequence." 50 **SECTION 6.(b)** This section becomes effective October 1, 2021, and applies to costs

51 and fees assessed on or after that date.

PART VII. MANDATORY EXEMPTION FROM PROBATION SUPERVISION FEE
WHEN PROBATION IS EXTENDED FOR THE SOLE PURPOSE OF COMPLYING
WITH MONETARY OBLIGATIONS
SECTION 7.(a) G.S. 15A-1343(c1) reads as rewritten:
"(c1) Supervision Fee. – Any person placed on supervised probation pursuant to subsection
(a) of this section shall pay a supervision fee of forty dollars (\$40.00) per month, unless exempted
by the court. The court may exempt a person from paying the fee only for good cause and upon
motion of the person placed on supervised probation. The court shall exempt a person from
paying the fee when probation is extended for the sole purpose of complying with monetary
obligations. No person shall be required to pay more than one supervision fee per month. The
court may require that the fee be paid in advance or in a lump sum or sums, and a probation
officer may require payment by such methods if he is authorized by subsection (g) to determine
the payment schedule. Supervision fees must be paid to the clerk of court for the county in which
the judgment was entered, the deferred prosecution agreement was filed, or the conditional
discharge was ordered. Fees collected under this subsection shall be transmitted to the State for
deposit into the State's General Fund."
SECTION 7.(b) This section is effective when it becomes law and applies to
supervision fees incurred in the calendar month after that date and all subsequent supervision
fees incurred in the same term of supervised probation.
PART VIII. EFFECTIVE DATE

23 SECTION 8. Except as otherwise provided, this act is effective when it becomes
24 law.