

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2025

H.B. 548
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HOUSE PRINCIPAL CLERK

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HOUSE BILL DRH10207-MCa-137

Short Title: NC Economic Progress and Well-Being.

(Public)

Sponsors: Representative Cohn.

Referred to:

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT TO MEASURE THE ECONOMIC PROGRESS AND WELL-BEING OF THE
3 STATE.

4 Whereas, North Carolinians have prioritized their economic well-being and its
5 advancement as essential work of our State lawmakers; and

6 Whereas, public policy choices can create the conditions for economic security and
7 progress; and

8 Whereas, the State's overall economic progress depends on the well-being of its
9 people and communities; and

10 Whereas, policymakers should monitor the impact of public policy choices on the
11 well-being of people across the State and economic progress by the assessments of people and
12 communities rather than markets and productivity alone; and

13 Whereas, the NC General Assembly should strive to conduct its work to advance for
14 every person in North Carolina; and

15 Whereas, it is essential to have a well-rounded opportunity to have economically safe,
16 stable, and secure lives, including (i) access to jobs that pay enough to ensure a standard of living
17 where a person can get ahead and a high level of life satisfaction, (ii) affordable prices for the
18 basics like food, housing, health care, and childcare, (iii) access to the education and training that
19 supports mobility, opportunity, and participation in civic life, (iv) opportunity to start and expand
20 business free from unfair competition and domination by monopolies and other unfair advantages
21 for certain kinds of businesses, (v) a community of opportunity free from concentrated
22 disadvantage, toxic exposures, and connected to supports to learn, earn, and live a healthy life,
23 and (vi) adequate protection from the economic fears of old age, sickness, climate disaster, and
24 unemployment; Now, therefore,

25 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

26 **SECTION 1.** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of
27 Commerce the recurring sum of two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000) for each fiscal year of
28 the 2025-2027 fiscal biennium to conduct biannual analyses of Economic Progress in North
29 Carolina. The Department shall report the results of the analyses to the General Assembly no
30 later than January 31 of every odd-numbered year, and each report shall meet all of the following
31 requirements:

- 32 (1) Utilize publicly available data and interview people of various socioeconomic
33 backgrounds.
- 34 (2) Measure, for the State and each county, at least the following metrics:
35 a. Hardship, as measured by the poverty rate, child poverty, deep
36 poverty, inequality, and the supplemental poverty rate.



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- 1 b. Share of jobs that (i) pay below a living income wage and (ii) provide
- 2 basic needs and quality conditions and benefits.
- 3 c. Share of a household's monthly income that goes to food, housing,
- 4 health care, and childcare.
- 5 d. Percent of people who are considered cost-burdened based on the
- 6 amount of income spent on housing, childcare, and health care
- 7 premiums.
- 8 e. Cost of postsecondary education and job training relative to income.
- 9 f. Persistent poverty census tracts and concentrated poverty census
- 10 tracts, including the number of people living in persistent and
- 11 concentrated poverty neighborhoods.

12 **SECTION 2.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2025.