

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2025

H.B. 649
Apr 1, 2025
HOUSE PRINCIPAL CLERK

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HOUSE BILL DRH10291-NI-48

Short Title: County Tier Designation Study Bill. (Public)

Sponsors: Representative Johnson.

Referred to:

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT TO DIRECT THE NORTH CAROLINA COLLABORATORY TO STUDY THE
3 EFFECTS OF VARIOUS PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE COUNTY TIER
4 DESIGNATION SYSTEM.

5 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

6 **SECTION 1.(a)** The North Carolina Collaboratory at the University of North
7 Carolina at Chapel Hill (Collaboratory) shall study the potential effects of the changes outlined
8 in this act on the county tier designation system under G.S. 143B-437.08.

9 **SECTION 1.(b)** The study shall focus on the following proposed changes to the
10 county tier designation system under G.S. 143B-437.08:

- 11 (1) Changing the criteria used to rank counties.
- 12 (2) Changing the way in which tier designations are assigned.
- 13 (3) Changing the time frame in which counties are ranked.

14 **SECTION 1.(c)** The study shall evaluate the impact of the proposed changes listed
15 in subsection (b) of this section on the following:

- 16 (1) The rankings of all 100 counties.
- 17 (2) Programs that use the tier designation system for their administration.
- 18 (3) The ease of doing business in the State.

19 **SECTION 1.(d)** The Collaboratory shall consult with the following agencies to
20 conduct the study required by this act:

- 21 (1) The Department of Commerce.
- 22 (2) The Department of Health and Human Services.
- 23 (3) The Department of Public Instruction.

24 **SECTION 1.(e)** The study shall evaluate whether the proposed changes listed in
25 subsection (b) of this section:

- 26 (1) Align with the State's economic development goals.
- 27 (2) Use current, reliable, timely, and high-quality data.
- 28 (3) Implement a methodology that is easy to understand.
- 29 (4) Accurately identify areas of distress.

30 **SECTION 2.** No later than December 31, 2025, the Collaboratory shall submit a
31 preliminary report of the results of the study required by this act to the Joint Legislative Economic
32 Development and Global Engagement Oversight Committee (EDGE) and the Fiscal Research
33 Division (FRD). No later than December 1, 2026, the Collaboratory shall submit a final report of
34 the results of the study required by this act to EDGE and FRD.

35 **SECTION 3.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2025.



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