

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2025

H.B. 953
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HOUSE PRINCIPAL CLERK

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HOUSE BILL DRH30373-ND-94A

Short Title: Study Committee on ADA/APD/PAC Pay. (Public)

Sponsors: Representative Budd.

Referred to:

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT TO ESTABLISH THE STUDY COMMITTEE ON ASSISTANT DISTRICT
3 ATTORNEY, ASSISTANT PUBLIC DEFENDER, AND PRIVATE ASSIGNED
4 COUNSEL PAY RATES.

5 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

6 **SECTION 1.** Committee Established. – There is established the Study Committee
7 on Assistant District Attorney, Assistant Public Defender, and Private Assigned Counsel Pay
8 Rates (Committee). The Committee shall include 12 voting members, as follows:

- 9 (1) Two members of the House of Representatives, appointed by the Speaker of
10 the House of Representatives.
11 (2) Two members of the Senate, appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the
12 Senate.
13 (3) Two members appointed by the Conference of District Attorneys.
14 (4) Two members appointed by the Office of Indigent Defense Services.
15 (5) Two members of the State Bar that practice criminal law, appointed by the
16 North Carolina Bar Association.
17 (6) Two members of the State Bar that practice criminal law, appointed by the
18 Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.

19 **SECTION 2.** Nonvoting Members; Cochairs. – The Executive Director of the
20 Conference of District Attorneys and the Executive Director of Indigent Defense Services shall
21 serve as nonvoting ex officio members of the Committee and shall serve as cochairs of the
22 Committee.

23 **SECTION 3.** Vacancies. – A vacancy on the Committee shall be filled by the original
24 appointing authority using the criteria for the prior appointment.

25 **SECTION 4.** Duties. – The Committee shall serve as a study and advisory committee
26 on the pay rates of assistant district attorneys, assistant public defenders, and private assigned
27 counsel. Pursuant to this work, the Committee shall study, at a minimum, each of the following:

- 28 (1) The current state of assistant district attorney, assistant public defender, and
29 private assigned counsel pay throughout the State, in general, and when
30 separated into the three cost-of-living categories of urban, suburban, and rural.
31 (2) The current pay structure for assistant district attorneys, assistant public
32 defenders, and private assigned counsel.
33 (3) The comparison between North Carolina's pay and pay structures studied
34 pursuant to subdivisions (1) and (2) of this section and the pay and pay
35 structures of comparable positions in neighboring and nearby states.



- 1 (4) The differences in cost of living, availability of housing, and other associated
2 costs in various cities, counties, and regions of the State.
- 3 (5) Factors that positively or negatively influence law students and attorneys
4 regarding the choice to serve as assistant district attorneys, assistant public
5 defenders, or private assigned counsel, including, at a minimum, the following
6 factors:
- 7 a. Local amenities.
8 b. Local school quality.
9 c. Economic development opportunities.
- 10 (6) The structured pay model utilized by the Offices of the United States
11 Attorneys.
- 12 (7) The structured pay and amenity allowances utilized by the United States
13 Armed Services.
- 14 (8) Any other subject the Committee finds relevant to its work.

15 **SECTION 5.** Administration. – The Committee shall meet upon the call of its
16 cochairs, and a quorum of the Committee shall be a majority of its voting members. Members of
17 the Committee shall receive per diem and necessary travel and subsistence expenses in
18 accordance with G.S. 120-3.1, 138-5, and 138-6, as applicable. The Committee may meet in the
19 Legislative Building or the Legislative Office Building. The Legislative Services Officer shall
20 assign professional and clerical staff and provide other necessary resources to assist the
21 Committee in its work.

22 **SECTION 6.** Reporting. – No later than March 1, 2026, in an interim report, and
23 March 1, 2027, in a final report, the Committee shall report to the following entities regarding
24 the information studied pursuant to this act, including any related findings and legislative
25 recommendations:

- 26 (1) The Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Justice and Public Safety.
27 (2) The Senate Appropriations Committee on Justice and Public Safety.
28 (3) The House Appropriations Committee on Justice and Public Safety.

29 **SECTION 7.** This act is effective when it becomes law.