

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2025

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SENATE BILL 554
Judiciary Committee Substitute Adopted 5/6/25

Short Title: Farmers Protection Act.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

March 26, 2025

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT TO ENACT THE FARMERS PROTECTION ACT TO PREVENT
DISCRIMINATION IN FINANCING AGAINST FARMERS.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. Article 6 of Chapter 53C of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

"§ 53C-6-21. Discrimination prohibited.

(a) For purposes of this section, an "agriculture producer" is defined as follows: "A person or other entity engaged in the production of crops or livestock for commercial purposes."

(b) Prohibition. – It is unlawful for a bank to deny or cancel its service to an agriculture producer based, in whole or in part, upon the agriculture producer's greenhouse gas emissions, use of fossil-fuel derived fertilizer, or use of fossil-fuel powered machinery.

(c) Enforcement. – The Commissioner shall monitor for compliance with this section as part of its recurring examinations of banks and may take enforcement actions against any banks that violate this section."

SECTION 2. G.S. 54B-78 reads as rewritten:

"§ 54B-78. Prohibited practices.

(a) ~~Any~~ A person or association ~~who shall engage that engages in any either~~ of the following acts or practices ~~shall be~~ is guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor:

(1) Defamation: Making, publishing, disseminating, or circulating, directly or indirectly, or aiding, abetting, or encouraging the making, publishing, disseminating, or circulating ~~of of~~ any oral, written, or printed statement ~~which that~~ is false regarding the financial condition of any association.

(2) False information and advertising: Making, publishing, disseminating, or circulating or causing, directly or indirectly, to be made published, disseminated, circulated, or otherwise placed before the public in any publication, media, notice, pamphlet, letter, poster, or any other way, an advertisement, announcement, or statement containing any assertion, representation, or statement with respect to the savings and loan business or with respect to any person in the conduct of the savings and loan business ~~which that~~ is untrue, deceptive, or misleading.

(b) The provisions of G.S. 53C-6-21 apply to a State association."

SECTION 3. G.S. 54C-64 reads as rewritten:

"§ 54C-64. Prohibited practices.

(a) A person ~~who that~~ engages in ~~any either~~ of the following acts or practices is guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor:



1 (1) Defamation: Making, publishing, disseminating, or circulating, directly or
2 indirectly, or aiding, abetting, or encouraging the making, publishing,
3 disseminating, or circulating ~~of~~ of any oral, written, or printed statement that
4 is false regarding the financial condition of any savings bank.

5 (2) False information and advertising: Making, publishing, disseminating,
6 circulating, or otherwise placing before the public in any publication, media,
7 notice, pamphlet, letter, poster, or any other way, an advertisement,
8 announcement, or statement containing any assertion, representation, or
9 statement with respect to the savings bank business or with respect to any
10 person in the conduct of the savings bank business that is untrue, deceptive,
11 or misleading.

12 (3) Repealed by Session Laws 1997-241, s. 2.

13 (b) The provisions of G.S. 53C-6-21 apply to a State savings bank."

14 **SECTION 4.** Article 14C of Chapter 54 of the General Statutes is amended by adding
15 a new section to read:

16 "**§ 54-109.23. Discrimination prohibited.**

17 The provisions of G.S. 53C-6-21 apply to a credit union. The Administrator has the
18 enforcement authority described in G.S. 53C-6-21(c)."

19 **SECTION 5.** This act is effective when it becomes law and applies to acts committed
20 on or after that date.