

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2025**

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SENATE BILL 368

Short Title: Office of State Fire Marshal Omnibus Bill.-AB (Public)

Sponsors: Senators Johnson, Barnes, and Lazzara (Primary Sponsors).

Referred to: Rules and Operations of the Senate

March 24, 2025

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT MANDATING ALL OTHER PERIL INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR CERTAIN ENTITIES, AUTHORIZING THE OFFICE OF THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL TO CONTRACT FOR SERVICES FOR ITS RISK MANAGEMENT DIVISION, MANDATING PARTICIPATION OF PUBLIC EDUCATION BOARDS IN THE STATE PUBLIC EDUCATION PROPERTY INSURANCE FUND, AUTHORIZING THE OFFICE OF THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL TO CHARGE AND WAIVE REGISTRATION FEES FOR ADVANCED FIRE AND RESCUE COURSES, PROVIDING STATE FUNDS FOR THE WAIVER OF REGISTRATION FEES FOR COURSES OFFERED BY THE OFFICE OF THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL, AUTHORIZING THE STATE FIRE AND RESCUE COMMISSION TO CONDUCT ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS, CLARIFYING THE POWERS OF THE NORTH CAROLINA HOME INSPECTOR LICENSURE BOARD, EXTENDING EXEMPTION FROM DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION OF PASSENGER MOTOR VEHICLES TO THE OFFICE OF THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL, EXEMPTING MANUFACTURED HOME MANUFACTURERS AND DEALERS FROM SHOWROOM REQUIREMENTS, MODERNIZING TERMINOLOGY FOR THE CODE OFFICIALS QUALIFICATION BOARD, ESTABLISHING FEES AND PROCEDURES FOR CODE OFFICIALS QUALIFICATION BOARD APPROVAL OF TRAINING COURSES, AUTHORIZING THE CREATION OF A VOLUNTARY APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM FOR CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS, CLARIFYING ELECTRICAL CODE REQUIREMENTS FOR ENERGIZING BUILDINGS, ENHANCING THE AUTHORITY OF THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL OVER LOCAL INSPECTIONS AND EMERGENCY ELECTRICAL INSPECTIONS, REQUIRING REFUNDS AND REMITTANCE OF BUILDING INSPECTION FEES WHEN INSPECTIONS ARE PERFORMED BY STATE AND OTHER OFFICIALS, AND ESTABLISHING RECORDS AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS FOR LOCAL INSPECTION DEPARTMENTS, AS RECOMMENDED BY THE OFFICE OF THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

PART I. MANDATE ALL OTHER PERIL COVERAGE FOR PARTICIPANTS IN THE STATE PUBLIC EDUCATION PROPERTY INSURANCE FUND AND STATE PROPERTY FIRE INSURANCE FUND

SECTION 1.(a) G.S. 58-31A-10 reads as rewritten:

"§ 58-31A-10. Flood ~~insurance~~; insurance; all other peril insurance.

(a) Premiums for flood insurance coverage for public education buildings shall be paid by each public education board in accordance with rates fixed by the State Fire Marshal, and the



State Fire Marshal may purchase from insurers admitted to do business in North Carolina such insurance or reinsurance as may be necessary to protect the State Public Education Insurance Fund against loss with respect to such insurance coverage.

(b) Every public education board and every charter school approved pursuant to G.S. 115C-218.5 that insures public education property titled to that board or charter school against the direct loss or damage by insurable hazards in public education buildings and other public education properties in the State Public Education Property Insurance Fund shall obtain and make payment for the all other perils coverage provided by the Fund."

SECTION 1.(b) G.S. 58-31-10 reads as rewritten:

"§ 58-31-10. Payment of losses on basis of actual cost of restoration or replacement; rules; insurance and reinsurance; sprinkler leakage ~~insurance~~; insurance; all other peril insurance.

...

(d) Every State department, institution, or agency that insures State property against the direct loss or damage by insurable hazards in the State Property Fire Insurance Fund shall obtain and make payment for the all other perils coverage provided by the Fund."

SECTION 1.(c) This section becomes effective July 1, 2025.

PART II. AUTHORIZE THE OFFICE OF THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL TO CONTRACT FOR SPECIALIZED OR TECHNICAL SERVICES ESSENTIAL TO THE OPERATION OF THE RISK MANAGEMENT DIVISION

SECTION 2.(a) G.S. 58-31A-15 reads as rewritten:

"§ 58-31A-15. Authority and rules for organization of system.

(a) The State Fire Marshal is hereby authorized, directed, and empowered to establish a division to manage and operate a system of insurance for public education property. The State Fire Marshal shall adopt such rules and regulations as may be necessary to provide all details inherent in the insurance of public education property. The State Fire Marshal shall employ any staff ~~necessary, which in his or her opinion is necessary~~ to insure and protect effectively public education property, and ~~he or she~~ shall fix their compensation consistent with the policies of the State Human Resources Commission.

(b) The State Fire Marshal shall, through the State's agent of record, contract for any specialized or technical services necessitating expertise not otherwise available within the Office of the State Fire Marshal that are determined by the State Fire Marshal to be essential to efficient operations. Contracts authorized pursuant to this subsection are not subject to Article 3C of Chapter 143 of the General Statutes."

SECTION 2.(b) This section becomes effective July 1, 2025.

PART III. MANDATE PARTICIPATION IN THE STATE PUBLIC EDUCATION PROPERTY INSURANCE FUND UNLESS COVERAGE WAIVER PROVIDED

SECTION 3.(a) G.S. 58-31A-25 reads as rewritten:

"§ 58-31A-25. ~~Insurance~~ Mandatory insurance of property by public education boards; ~~notice of election to insure and information to be furnished; outstanding policies.~~ boards.

(a) Mandatory Insurance in the Fund. – All public education boards may shall insure all public education property titled to that board against the direct loss or damage by insurable hazards in public education buildings and other public education properties in the Fund. Any property covered by an insurance policy in effect on the date when the property of a public education board is insured in the Fund shall be insured by the Fund as of the expiration of the policy. Each public education board shall give notice of its election to insure in the Fund at least 90 days prior to such insurance becoming effective and shall furnish to the State Fire Marshal a full and complete list of all outstanding property insurance policies, giving in complete detail the

~~name of the insurers, the amount of the insurance and expirations thereof. While the said insurance policies remain in effect, the Fund shall act as coinsurer of the properties covered by such insurance to the same extent and in the same manner as is provided for coinsurance under the provisions of the standard form of property insurance as provided by law, and in the event of loss shall have the same rights and duties as required by participating insurance companies. Fund, unless a waiver has been approved for that public education board.~~

(b) Waiver. – A public education board may request a waiver under this section. The Office of the State Fire Marshal shall review and approve a waiver submitted pursuant to this subsection only if the public education board has procured sufficient minimum coverage of relevant perils."

SECTION 3.(b) If any property titled to a public education board is covered by an insurance policy in effect on July 1, 2025, then the Fund shall act as a coinsurer of the properties covered by that insurance until the expiration of that policy.

SECTION 3.(c) This section becomes effective July 1, 2025.

PART IV. NORTH CAROLINA EMERGENCY TRAINING CENTER STATE REGISTRATION FEE WAIVER

SECTION 4.(a) Article 78A of Chapter 58 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

"§ 58-78A-18. Emergency Training Center tuition waivers.

(a) Registration Fees. – The Office of the State Fire Marshal shall charge State registration fees for advanced fire and rescue courses delivered by the Office of the State Fire Marshal at the North Carolina Emergency Training Center. The State registration fee charged shall equal the tuition amount set pursuant to G.S. 115D-39 for equivalent community college courses.

(b) Allowed Tuition Waivers. – The Office of the State Fire Marshal may waive State registration fees for advanced fire and rescue courses delivered by the Office of the State Fire Marshal at the North Carolina Emergency Training Center for all of the following individuals, entities, and members of those entities:

(1) Volunteer fire departments located within North Carolina.

(2) Municipal, county, or State fire departments located within North Carolina.

(3) Emergency medical services or rescue and lifesaving departments located within North Carolina.

(4) Fire, emergency medical services, or rescue and lifesaving entities serving a lake authority that was created by a North Carolina county board of commissioners prior to July 1, 2012.

(5) The Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians fire, emergency medical services, or rescue and lifesaving tribal government departments or programs.

(6) Firefighters, emergency medical services personnel, law enforcement personnel, and rescue and lifesaving personnel whose duty station is located on a military installation within North Carolina.

(7) Law enforcement personnel employed by departments located within North Carolina.

(8) High school students at schools located within North Carolina.

(c) Fees. – The Office of the State Fire Marshal may charge additional fees to cover the costs of textbooks, supplies, and other expenses incurred in the delivery of courses or the operation of the North Carolina Emergency Training Center.

(d) Annual Report. – Annually by February 1 of each year, the Office of the State Fire Marshal shall report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee and the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on General Government on the number and type of waivers granted pursuant to subsection (b) of this section."

SECTION 4.(b) Funds shall be provided to the Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM) based on the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) students enrolled in advanced fire and rescue courses delivered by OSFM at the North Carolina Emergency Training Center for whom State registration fees are waived in accordance with G.S. 58-78A-18(b). OSFM shall calculate FTE enrollment in the same manner as community colleges. Funds provided pursuant to this subsection shall be: (i) based on the equivalent tier-value for community college instruction and (ii) in the same manner as funds are provided to community colleges based on the number of FTE students enrolled in courses for which tuition and registration fees are waived in accordance with G.S. 115D-5(b). OSFM shall not be considered a community college, as that term is defined in G.S. 115D-2(2), or subject to the requirements imposed on community colleges by Chapter 115D of the General Statutes.

SECTION 4.(c) This section becomes effective July 1, 2025.

PART V. CLARIFY POWERS AND DUTIES OF STATE FIRE AND RESCUE COMMISSION

SECTION 5.(a) G.S. 58-78-5 reads as rewritten:

"§ 58-78-5. State Fire and Rescue Commission – Powers and duties.

(a) The Commission shall have the following powers and duties:

...

(18) To conduct administrative hearings in accordance with Article 3A of Chapter 150B of the General Statutes.

...."

SECTION 5.(b) G.S. 150B-38(a) reads as rewritten:

"§ 150B-38. Scope; hearing required; notice; venue.

(a) The provisions of this Article shall apply to:

...

(5b) The State Fire and Rescue Commission.

...."

SECTION 5.(c) This section becomes effective October 1, 2025, and applies to administrative hearings commenced on or after that date.

PART VI. CLARIFY POWERS OF THE NORTH CAROLINA HOME INSPECTOR LICENSURE BOARD REGARDING LICENSING EDUCATION AND EXAMINATION FEES

SECTION 6.(a) G.S. 143-151.49 reads as rewritten:

"§ 143-151.49. Powers and responsibilities of Board.

...

(b) Education Requirements. – The education program adopted by the Board may not consist of more than 200 hours of instruction. The instruction may include field training, classroom instruction, distance learning, peer review, and any other educational format approved by the Board. The Board may adopt rules regarding course content, instructor qualifications, approved course offerings, and other criteria for compliance with the education program."

SECTION 6.(b) G.S. 143-151.57 reads as rewritten:

"§ 143-151.57. Fees.

(a) Maximum Fees. – The Board may adopt fees that do not exceed the amounts set in the following table for administering this Article:

Item	Maximum Fee
Application for home inspector license	\$35.00
Home inspector examination <u>examination, in person</u>	80.00
<u>Home inspector examination, online</u>	200.00
Issuance or renewal of home inspector license	160.00

1	Late renewal of home inspector license	30.00
2	Application for course approval	150.00
3	Renewal of course approval	75.00
4	Course fee, per credit hour per licensee	5.00
5	Credit for unapproved continuing education course	50.00
6	Copies of Board rules or licensure standards	Cost of printing
7		and mailing.

8"

9 **SECTION 6.(c)** This section becomes effective October 1, 2025.

10
11 **PART VII. EXEMPT MANUFACTURED HOME MANUFACTURERS AND DEALERS**
12 **FROM SALESROOM REQUIREMENTS**

13 **SECTION 7.** G.S. 20-288 reads as rewritten:

14 **"§ 20-288. Application for license; license requirements; expiration of license; bond.**

15 ...

16 (d) To obtain a license as a wholesaler, an applicant who intends to sell or distribute
17 self-propelled vehicles must have an established office in this State, and an applicant who intends
18 to sell or distribute only trailers or semitrailers of more than 2,500 pounds unloaded weight must
19 have a place of business in this State where the records required under this Article are kept.

20 To obtain a license as a motor vehicle dealer, an applicant who intends to deal in
21 self-propelled vehicles must have an established salesroom in this State, and an applicant who
22 intends to deal in only trailers or semitrailers of more than 2,500 pounds unloaded weight must
23 have a place of business in this State where the records required under this Article are kept.

24 An applicant for a license as a manufacturer, a factory branch, a distributor, a distributor
25 branch, a wholesaler, or a motor vehicle dealer must have a separate license for each established
26 office, established salesroom, or other place of business in this State. An application for any of
27 these licenses shall include a list of the applicant's places of business in this State.

28 This subsection does not apply to manufactured home dealers, as defined by
29 G.S. 143-143.9(7), or manufactured home manufacturers, as defined by G.S. 143-143.9(8).

30"

31
32 **PART VIII. MODERNIZE CODE OFFICIALS QUALIFICATION BOARD**
33 **STATUTORY LANGUAGE, ESTABLISH FEES AND PROCEDURES FOR BOARD**
34 **APPROVAL OF CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICIAL TRAINING COURSES, AND**
35 **AUTHORIZE THE CREATION OF A VOLUNTARY APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM**
36 **FOR CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS**

37 **SECTION 8.(a)** G.S. 143-151.8 reads as rewritten:

38 **"§ 143-151.8. Definitions.**

39 (a) The following definitions apply in this Article:

40 ...

41 (5) Qualified ~~Code enforcement~~ Code official. – A person qualified under this
42 Article to engage in the practice of Code ~~enforcement~~ compliance inspections
43 or review.

44"

45 **SECTION 8.(b)** G.S. 143-151.11 reads as rewritten:

46 **"§ 143-151.11. Chairman; vice-chairman; other officers; meetings; reports.**

47 ...

48 (d) The activities and recommendations of the Board with respect to standards for Code
49 officials training and certification ~~licensing~~ shall be set forth in regular and special reports made
50 by the Board. Additionally, the Board shall present special reports and recommendations to the

Governor or the General Assembly, or both, as the need may arise or as the Governor or the General Assembly may request."

SECTION 8.(c) G.S. 143-151.12 reads as rewritten:

"§ 143-151.12. Powers.

In addition to powers conferred upon the Board elsewhere in this Article, the Board has the power to do the following:

- (1) Adopt rules necessary to administer this Article.
- (1a) Require State agencies, local inspection departments, and local governing bodies to submit reports and information about the employment, education, and training of ~~Code-enforcement~~ Code officials.
- (2) Establish minimum standards for employment as a ~~Code-enforcement~~ Code official: (i) in probationary or temporary status, and (ii) in permanent positions.
- (3) ~~Certify-License persons as being qualified to practice Code compliance inspections or review under the provisions of this Article to be Code-enforcement-as Code~~ officials, including persons employed by a federally recognized Indian Tribe to perform inspections on tribal lands.
- (3a) Certify persons as being qualified under the provisions of this Article to be North Carolina State Building Code Permit Technicians.
- (4) Consult and cooperate with counties, municipalities, agencies of this State, other governmental agencies, and with universities, colleges, junior colleges, community colleges and other institutions concerning the development of ~~Code-enforcement~~ Code compliance inspections or review training schools and programs or courses of instruction.
- (5) Establish minimum standards and levels of education or equivalent experience for all ~~Code-enforcement~~ Code compliance inspections or review instructors, teachers or professors.
- (6) Conduct and encourage research by public and private agencies that shall be designed to improve education and training in the administration of ~~Code enforcement~~ Code compliance inspections or review.
- (7) Adopt and amend bylaws, consistent with law, for its internal management and control; appoint advisory committees as necessary; and enter into contracts and do other things as necessary and incidental to the exercise of its authority pursuant to this Article.
- (8) Make recommendations concerning any matters within its purview pursuant to this Article.
- (9) Establish within the Office of the State Fire Marshal a marketplace pool of qualified ~~Code-enforcement~~ Code officials available for the following purposes:
 - a. When requested by the State Fire Marshal, to assist in the discharge of the State Fire Marshal's duty under G.S. 143-139 to supervise, administer, and enforce the North Carolina State Building Code. The State Fire Marshal shall have the power and authority to fix and collect reasonable fees for services performed by ~~Code-enforcement~~ Code officials under this sub-subdivision. The State Fire Marshal may also collect reimbursement, at the rate established under G.S. 138-6, for mileage costs incurred by ~~Code-enforcement~~ Code officials going to and from inspections conducted under this sub-subdivision. The State Fire Marshal shall have no power or authority to fix or collect fees incurred by local inspection departments under sub-subdivision b. of this subdivision.

b. When requested by local inspection departments, to assist in Code enforcement compliance inspections or review."

SECTION 8.(d) G.S. 143-151.13 reads as rewritten:

"§ 143-151.13. Required standards and ~~certificates~~ licenses for ~~Code enforcement~~ Code officials.

(a) No person shall engage in Code ~~enforcement~~ compliance inspections or review under this Article unless that person possesses one of the following types of ~~certificates~~, licenses, currently valid, issued by the Board attesting to that person's qualifications to engage in Code ~~enforcement~~: ~~compliance inspections or review~~: (i) a standard ~~certificate~~, license; (ii) a limited ~~certificate~~ license provided for in subsection (c) of this section; or (iii) a probationary ~~certificate~~ license provided for in subsection (d) of this section. To obtain a standard ~~certificate~~, license, a person must pass an examination, as prescribed by the Board or by a contracting party under G.S. 143-151.16(d), that is based on the North Carolina State Building Code and administrative procedures required for Code ~~enforcement~~. ~~compliance inspections or review~~. The Board may issue a standard ~~certificate of qualification~~ license to each person who successfully completes the examination. The ~~certificate~~ license authorizes that person to engage in Code ~~enforcement~~ compliance inspections or review and to practice as a qualified ~~Code enforcement~~ Code official in North Carolina. The ~~certificate of qualification~~ license shall bear the signatures of the chairman and secretary of the Board.

(b) The Board shall issue one or more standard ~~certificates~~ licenses to each ~~Code enforcement~~ Code official demonstrating the qualifications set forth in subsection (b1) of this section. Standard ~~certificates~~ licenses are available for each of the following types of qualified ~~Code enforcement~~ Code officials:

- (1) Building inspector.
- (2) Electrical inspector.
- (3) Mechanical inspector.
- (4) Plumbing inspector.
- (5) Fire inspector.
- (6) Residential changeout inspector.

(b1) The holder of a standard ~~certificate~~ license may practice Code ~~enforcement~~ compliance inspections or review only within the inspection area and level described upon the ~~certificate~~ license issued by the Board. A ~~Code enforcement~~ Code official may qualify and hold one or more ~~certificates~~ licenses. These ~~certificates~~ licenses may be for different levels in different types of positions as defined in this section and in rules adopted by the Board.

(b2) A ~~Code enforcement~~ Code official holding a ~~certificate~~ license indicating a specified level of proficiency in a particular type of position may hold a position calling for that type of qualification anywhere in the State. With respect to all types of ~~Code enforcement~~ Code officials, those with Level I, Level II, or Level III ~~certificates~~ licenses shall be qualified to inspect and approve only those types and sizes of buildings as specified in rules adopted by the Board.

(c) A ~~Code enforcement~~ Code official holding office as of the date specified in this subsection for the county or municipality by which he is employed, shall not be required to possess a standard ~~certificate~~ license as a condition of tenure or continued employment but shall be required to complete such in-service training as may be prescribed by the Board. At the earliest practicable date, such official shall receive from the Board a limited ~~certificate~~ license qualifying him to engage in Code ~~enforcement~~ compliance inspections or review at the level, in the particular type of position, and within the governmental jurisdiction in which he is employed. The limited ~~certificate~~ license shall be valid only as an authorization for the official to continue in the position he held on the applicable date and shall become invalid if he does not complete in-service training within two years following the applicable date in the schedule below, according to the governmental jurisdiction's population as published in the 1970 U.S. Census:

Counties and Municipalities over 75,000 population – July 1, 1979

1 Counties and Municipalities between 50,001 and 75,000 – July 1, 1981

2 Counties and Municipalities between 25,001 and 50,000 – July 1, 1983

3 Counties and Municipalities 25,000 and under – July 1, 1985

4 All fire prevention inspectors holding office – July 1, 1989. Fire prevention inspectors have
5 until July 1, 1993, to complete in-service training.

6 An official holding a limited ~~certificate~~-license can be promoted to a position requiring a
7 higher level ~~certificate~~-license only upon issuance by the Board of a standard ~~certificate~~-license
8 or probationary ~~certificate~~-license appropriate for such new position.

9 (d) The Board may provide for the issuance of probationary or temporary ~~certificates~~
10 licenses valid for such period (not less than one year nor more than three years) as specified by
11 the Board's rules, or until June 30, 1983, whichever is later, to any ~~Code enforcement~~-Code
12 official newly employed or newly promoted who lacks the qualifications prescribed by the Board
13 as prerequisite to applying for a standard ~~certificate~~-license under subsection (a). No official may
14 have a probationary or temporary ~~certificate~~-license extended beyond the specified period by
15 renewal or otherwise. The Board may provide for appropriate levels of probationary or temporary
16 ~~certificates~~-licenses and may issue these ~~certificates~~-licenses with such special conditions or
17 requirements relating to the place of employment of the person holding the ~~certificate~~, license,
18 his supervision on a consulting or advisory basis, or other matters as the Board may deem
19 necessary to protect the public safety and health.

20 (e) The Board shall, without requiring an examination, issue a standard ~~certificate~~-license
21 to any person who is currently certified as a county electrical inspector pursuant to
22 G.S. 160D-1102. The ~~certificate~~-license issued by the Board shall authorize the person to serve
23 at the electrical inspector level approved by the State Fire Marshal in G.S. 160D-1102.

24 (f) The Board shall issue a standard ~~certificate~~-license to any person who passes the
25 examination required under subsection (a) of this section and is currently licensed to practice as
26 ~~a(n):~~any of the following:

- 27 (1) Architect, ~~registered~~-licensed pursuant to Chapter ~~83A~~;83A of the General
28 Statutes.
- 29 (2) General contractor, licensed pursuant to Article 1 of Chapter ~~87~~;87 of the
30 General Statutes.
- 31 (3) Plumbing or heating contractor, licensed pursuant to Article 2 of Chapter
32 ~~87~~;87 of the General Statutes.
- 33 (4) Electrical contractor, licensed pursuant to Article 4 of Chapter ~~87~~;~~or~~,87 of the
34 General Statutes.
- 35 (5) Professional engineer, ~~registered~~-licensed pursuant to Chapter ~~89C~~;89C of the
36 General Statutes.

37 ~~provided the person successfully completes a short course, as prescribed by the Board, relating~~
38 ~~to the State Building Code regulations and Code enforcement administration.~~ The standard
39 ~~certificate~~-license shall authorize the person to practice as a qualified ~~Code enforcement~~-Code
40 official in a particular type of position at the level determined by the Board, based on the type of
41 license ~~or registration~~ held in any profession specified above.

42 (g) A licensed architect or licensed professional engineer who possesses a valid
43 ~~certificate~~-license under subsection (f) of this section, but is not employed by the State or a local
44 government, may utilize that ~~certificate~~-license for the limited purpose of performing independent
45 third-party plan review under subsections (d) and (e) of G.S. 160D-1110.1.

46 (h) Notwithstanding any other subsection of this section, the Board, in conjunction with
47 the Office of the State Fire Marshal, may establish a voluntary apprenticeship program for any
48 license issued under this section. The program shall consist of coursework and supervised work
49 under a certified Code official in the relevant discipline. A trainee must pass a standard
50 examination prior to issuance of any license. The Board may charge a fee for participation in the
51 program. The fee shall not exceed the cost of the program."

1 **SECTION 8.(e)** G.S. 143-151.13A reads as rewritten:

2 **"§ 143-151.13A. Professional development program for ~~officials~~officials; course sponsor**
3 **fees.**

4 (a) As used in this section, "official" means a qualified ~~Code-enforcement~~Code official
5 as that term is defined in G.S. 143-151.8.

6 (b) The Board may establish professional development requirements for officials as a
7 condition of the renewal or reactivation of their ~~certificates~~licenses. The purposes of these
8 professional development requirements are to assist officials in maintaining professional
9 competence in their enforcement of the Code and to assure the health, safety, and welfare of the
10 citizens of North Carolina. An official subject to this section shall present evidence to the Board
11 at each ~~certificate~~license renewal after initial ~~certification~~licensure that during the 12 months
12 before the ~~certificate~~license expiration date, the official has completed the required number of
13 credit hours in courses approved by the Board. Annual continuing education hour requirements
14 shall be determined by the Board but shall not be more than six credit hours.

15 (c) The Board may require an individual who earns a ~~certificate~~license under programs
16 established in G.S. 143-151.13 to complete professional development courses, not to exceed six
17 hours in each technical area of ~~certification~~licensure within one year after that individual is first
18 employed by a city or county inspection department.

19 (d) As a condition of reactivating a standard or limited ~~certificate~~license, the Board may
20 require the completion of professional development courses within one year after reemployment
21 as an official as follows:

22 (1) An individual who has been on inactive status for more than two years and
23 who has not been continuously employed by a city or county inspection
24 department during the period of inactive status shall complete professional
25 development courses not to exceed six hours for each technical area in which
26 the individual is ~~certified~~licensed.

27 (2) An individual who has been on inactive status for more than two years and
28 who has been continuously employed by a city or county inspection
29 department during the period of inactive status shall complete professional
30 development courses not to exceed three hours for each technical area in
31 which the individual is ~~certified~~licensed.

32 (3) An individual who has been on inactive status for two years or less shall
33 complete professional development courses not to exceed two hours for each
34 technical area in which the individual is ~~certified~~licensed.

35 (e) The Board may, for good cause shown, grant extensions of time to officials to comply
36 with these requirements. An official who, after obtaining an extension under this subsection,
37 offers evidence satisfactory to the Board that the official has satisfactorily completed the required
38 professional development courses, is in compliance with this section.

39 (f) The Board may adopt rules to implement this section, including rules that govern:

40 (1) The content and subject matter of professional development courses.

41 (2) The criteria, standards, and procedures for the approval of courses, course
42 sponsors, and course instructors.

43 (3) The methods of instruction.

44 (4) The computation of course credit.

45 (5) The ability to carry-forward course credit from one year to another.

46 (6) The waiver of or variance from the professional development required for
47 hardship or other reasons.

48 (7) The procedures for compliance and sanctions for noncompliance.

49 (g) Each course sponsor shall pay the Board a fee of one dollar (\$1.00) per approved
50 credit hour per individual who successfully completes a course under the provisions of this
51 section.

(h) At the time a course sponsor submits an application to the Board for approval of a course under the provisions of this section, the sponsor shall pay to the State Fire Marshal a filing fee of one hundred dollars (\$100.00) per course up to a maximum of two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500) per calendar year.

(i) An official who selects a course other than one offered by an approved course sponsor and who seeks approval of the course pursuant to rules adopted by the Board shall, upon approval of the course, pay a fee of one dollar (\$1.00) per approved credit hour."

SECTION 8.(f) G.S. 143-151.14 reads as rewritten:

"§ 143-151.14. Comity.

(a) The Board may, without requiring an examination, grant a standard ~~certificate-license~~ as a qualified ~~Code-enforcement-Code~~ official for a particular type of position and level to any person who, at the time of application, is certified as a qualified ~~Code-enforcement-Code~~ official in good standing by a similar board of another state, district or territory where standards are acceptable to the Board and not lower than those required by this Article for a similar type of position and level in this State.

(b) The Board may, without requiring an examination, grant a standard ~~certificate-license~~ as a qualified ~~Code-enforcement-Code~~ official for a particular type of position and level to any person who, at the time of application, is ~~certified-licensed~~ as a qualified ~~Code-enforcement-Code~~ official in good standing by the International Code ~~Council~~-Council, the United States Department of Defense, or the International Fire Services Accreditation Congress where standards and examination are acceptable to the Board and not lower than those required by this Article for a type of position and level in this State.

(c) The ~~certificates-licenses~~ granted under subsections (a) and (b) of this section shall expire after three years unless within that time period the holder completes a short course, as prescribed by the Board, relating to the State Building Code regulations and ~~Code-enforcement-Code~~ Code compliance inspection or review administration.

(d) A fee of not more than twenty dollars (\$20.00), as determined by the Board, must be paid by any applicant to the Board for the issuance of a ~~certificate-license~~ under this section. The provisions of G.S. 143-151.16(b) relating to renewal fees and late renewals shall apply to every person granted a standard ~~certificate-license~~ in accordance with this section."

SECTION 8.(g) G.S. 143-151.15 reads as rewritten:

"§ 143-151.15. Return of ~~certificate-license~~ to Board; reissuance by Board.

A ~~certificate-license~~ issued by the Board under this Article is valid as long as the person ~~certified-licensed~~ is employed by the State of North Carolina or any political subdivision thereof as a ~~Code-enforcement-Code~~ official, or is employed by a federally recognized Indian Tribe to perform inspections on tribal lands as a ~~Code-enforcement-Code~~ official. When the person ~~certified-licensed~~ leaves that employment for any reason, he shall return the ~~certificate-license~~ to the Board. If the person subsequently obtains employment as a ~~Code-enforcement-Code~~ official in any governmental jurisdiction described above, the Board may reissue the ~~certificate-license~~ to him. The provisions of G.S. 143-151.16(b) relating to renewal fees and late renewals shall apply, if appropriate. The provisions of G.S. 143-151.16(c) shall not apply. This section does not affect the Board's powers under G.S. 143-151.17."

SECTION 8.(h) G.S. 143-151.16 reads as rewritten:

"§ 143-151.16. Certification-License fees; renewal of certificates; licenses; examination fees.

(a) The Board shall establish a schedule of fees to be paid by each applicant for ~~certification-licensure~~ as a qualified ~~Code-enforcement-Code~~ official. Such fee shall not exceed twenty dollars (\$20.00) for each ~~applicant-license application~~.

(b) A ~~certificate, license,~~ other than a probationary ~~certificate, license,~~ as a qualified ~~Code-enforcement-Code~~ official issued pursuant to the provisions of this Article must be renewed annually on or before ~~the first day of July.~~ June 30. Each application for renewal must be accompanied by a renewal fee to be determined by the Board, but not to exceed ~~ten dollars~~

1 ~~(\$10.00)-fifty dollars (\$50.00).~~ The Board is authorized to charge an extra four dollar (\$4.00)
2 late renewal fee for renewals made after ~~the first day of July~~ June 30 each year.

3 (c) Any person who fails to renew his ~~certificate-license~~ for a period of two consecutive
4 years may be required by the Board to take and pass the same examination as unlicensed
5 applicants before allowing such person to renew his ~~certificate-license~~.

6 ...
7 (e) The Board shall approve course offerings for all continuing education programs and
8 may charge a fee of up to one hundred dollars (\$100.00) per course for review and approval of
9 the continuing education program."

10 **SECTION 8.(i)** G.S. 143-151.17 reads as rewritten:

11 **"§ 143-151.17. Grounds for disciplinary actions; investigation; administrative procedures.**

12 (a) The Board has the power to suspend, revoke, demote to a lower level, or refuse to
13 grant a ~~certificate-license~~ issued under this Article to any person to whom any of the following
14 applies:

- 15 (1) Has been convicted of a felony against this State or the United States, or
16 convicted of a felony in another state that would also be a felony if it had been
17 committed in this State.
- 18 (2) Has obtained ~~certification-licensure~~ through fraud, deceit, or perjury.
- 19 (3) Has knowingly aided or abetted any person practicing contrary to the
20 provisions of this Article or the State Building Code or any building codes
21 adopted by a federally recognized Indian Tribe.
- 22 (4) Has defrauded the public or attempted to do so.
- 23 (5) Has affixed his or her signature to a report of inspection or other instrument
24 of service if no inspection has been made by him or her or under his or her
25 immediate and responsible direction.
- 26 (6) Has been guilty of willful misconduct, gross negligence, or gross
27 incompetence.

28 (b) The Board may investigate the actions of any qualified ~~Code-enforcement-Code~~
29 official or applicant upon the verified complaint in writing of any person alleging a violation of
30 subsection (a) of this section. The Board may suspend, revoke, or demote to a lower level any
31 ~~certificate-license~~ of any qualified ~~Code-enforcement-Code~~ official and refuse to grant a
32 ~~certificate-license~~ to any applicant, whom it finds to have been guilty of one or more of the actions
33 set out in subsection (a) of this section as grounds for disciplinary action.

34 (c) A denial, suspension, revocation, or demotion to a lower level of a ~~certificate-license~~
35 issued under this Article shall be made in accordance with Chapter 150B of the General Statutes.

36 (d) The Board may deny an application for a ~~certificate-license~~ for any of the grounds
37 that are described in subsection (a) of this section. Within 30 days after receipt of a notification
38 that an application for a ~~certificate-license~~ has been denied, the applicant may make a written
39 request for a review by a committee designated by the chairman of the Board to determine the
40 reasonableness of the Board's action. The review shall be completed without undue delay, and
41 the applicant shall be notified promptly in writing as to the outcome of the review. Within 30
42 days after service of the notification as to the outcome, the applicant may make a written request
43 for a hearing under Article 3A of Chapter 150B of the General Statutes if the applicant disagrees
44 with the outcome.

45 (e) This section applies to ~~Code-enforcement-Code~~ officials and applicants who are
46 employed or seek to be employed by a federally recognized Indian Tribe to perform inspections
47 on tribal lands."

48 **SECTION 8.(j)** G.S. 143-151.18 reads as rewritten:

49 **"§ 143-151.18. Violations; penalty; injunction.**

50 On and after July 1, 1979, it shall be unlawful for any person to represent himself as a
51 qualified ~~Code-enforcement-Code~~ official who does not hold a currently valid ~~certificate-of~~

1 ~~qualification license~~ issued by the Board. Further, it shall be unlawful for any person to practice
2 Code ~~enforcement compliance inspections or review~~ except as allowed by any currently valid
3 ~~certificate license~~ issued to that person by the Board. Any person violating any of the provisions
4 of this Article shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor. The Board is authorized to apply to any
5 judge of the superior court for an injunction in order to prevent any violation or threatened
6 violation of the provisions of this Article."

7 **SECTION 8.(k)** G.S. 143-151.19 reads as rewritten:

8 **"§ 143-151.19. Administration.**

9 (a) The Division of Engineering and Building Codes in the ~~Department of Insurance~~
10 ~~Office of the State Fire Marshal~~ shall provide clerical and other staff services required by the
11 Board, and shall administer and enforce all provisions of this Article and all rules promulgated
12 pursuant to this Article, subject to the direction of the Board, except as delegated by this Article
13 to local units of government, other State agencies, corporations, or individuals.

14 (b) The Board shall make copies of this Article and the rules adopted under this Article
15 available to the public at a price determined by the Board.

16 (c) The Board shall keep current a record of the names and addresses of all qualified
17 ~~Code enforcement Code~~ officials and additional personal data as the Board deems necessary.
18 The Board ~~annually shall publish a list~~ maintain a directory of all currently ~~certified~~
19 ~~Code enforcement licensed~~ Code officials.

20 (d) Each ~~certificate license~~ issued by the Board shall contain such identifying information
21 as the Board requires.

22 (e) The Board shall issue a duplicate ~~certificate license~~ to practice as a qualified
23 ~~Code enforcement Code~~ official in place of one which has been lost, destroyed, or mutilated
24 upon proper application and payment of a fee to be determined by the Board."

25 **SECTION 8.(l)** G.S. 143-151.20 reads as rewritten:

26 **"§ 143-151.20. Donations and appropriations.**

27 ...

28 (b) The Board may provide grants as a reimbursement for actual expenses incurred by
29 the State or political subdivision thereof for the provisions of training programs of officials from
30 other jurisdictions within the State. The Board, by rules, shall provide for the administration of
31 the grant program authorized herein. In promulgating such rules, the Board shall promote the
32 most efficient and economical program of ~~Code enforcement Code compliance inspection or~~
33 ~~review~~ training, including the maximum utilization of existing facilities and programs for the
34 purpose of avoiding duplication."

35 **SECTION 8.(m)** G.S. 143-151.21 reads as rewritten:

36 **"§ 143-151.21. Disposition of fees.**

37 Fees collected by the State Fire Marshal under this Article shall be ~~credited to the Insurance~~
38 ~~Regulatory Fund created under G.S. 58-6-25~~ deposited in the State treasury to the account of the
39 Board."

40 **SECTION 8.(n)** G.S. 143-151.22, as enacted by Section 3.4(b) of S.L. 2024-49,
41 reads as rewritten:

42 **"§ 143-151.22. North Carolina State Building Code Permit Technician; certification**
43 **program; professional development requirements; renewal of certificates; fees;**
44 **exam waivers.**

45 (a) State Building Code Permit Technician Certification Program. – The Board shall
46 develop a North Carolina State Building Code Permit Technician certification program and North
47 Carolina State Building Code Permit Technician Certificate. To obtain a certificate, a person
48 must pass an examination, as prescribed by the Board, that is based on the North Carolina State
49 Building Code, administrative procedures applicable to permit administration, and relevant
50 topics in support of ~~Code enforcement Code~~ officials and local inspection departments. The

Board may issue a certificate to each person who successfully completes the examination. The certificate shall bear the signatures of the chairman and secretary of the Board.

...

(e) ~~Qualified Code-Enforcement-Code~~ Official Exam Waiver. – The Board shall, without requiring an examination, grant a certificate pursuant to this section to any person who, at the time of application, possesses a Building Inspector standard ~~certificate~~ license issued by the Board and who is in good standing. The Board may assess a fee for a certificate issued pursuant to this subsection, to the extent authorized by subsection (d) of this section for an initial certification.

...."

SECTION 8.(o) G.S. 143-151.23 reads as rewritten:

"§ 143-151.23. Disasters and emergencies; temporary ~~certificates~~ licenses.

(a) When a state of emergency, as defined in G.S. 166A-19.3, has been declared by the Governor due to a natural disaster such as a hurricane, tornado, or flood, or due to a pending disaster, the Board may issue temporary standard or limited ~~certificates~~ licenses to retired qualified ~~Code-enforcement-Code~~ officials to conduct ~~Code enforcement-compliance inspections or review~~ in the emergency area, as defined in G.S. 166A-19.3, for the duration of the state of emergency.

(b) A temporary standard or limited ~~certificate~~ license issued under this section shall expire at the termination of the state of emergency or 12 months, whichever is earlier. If after 12 months the state of emergency has not expired, the Board may renew the temporary standard or limited ~~certificate~~ license.

(c) A qualified ~~Code-enforcement-Code~~ official who has been on inactive status and is issued a temporary standard or limited ~~certificate~~ license under this section shall not be subject to the continuing education requirements established pursuant to G.S. 143-151.13A, unless the individual has been inactive or retired over two years and not continuously employed by a city or county inspection department."

SECTION 8.(p) Transition from Certificates to Licenses. – The following provisions shall govern the transition from certificates previously issued by the Code Officials Qualification Board to licenses under this section:

(1) Automatic conversion. – All individuals holding valid probationary, standard, or limited Code-official certificates issued by the Board as of the effective date of this section shall automatically be deemed to hold the equivalent licenses issued under Article 9C of Chapter 143 of the General Statutes, as amended by this section, without further examination, application, fees, or additional qualification requirements. These licenses shall authorize holders to engage in Code-enforcement or Code compliance inspection or review activities to the same extent and under the same conditions as the certificates previously held.

(2) Pending applications. – An application for certification submitted prior to the effective date of this section, which remains pending on that date, shall be processed as an application for licensure. Such application shall not require resubmission or additional qualifications solely due to the change in designation from certificate to license provided by this section. A license issued pursuant to this subdivision shall be approved under the same conditions and standards that applied to certification immediately prior to the effective date of this section.

(3) Renewal of licenses. – Upon expiration of any certificate converted into a license under subdivision (1) of this subsection, the Board shall permit individuals to renew their credential under the standards applicable to a license

in accordance with the renewal provisions of G.S. 143-151.16, as amended by subsection (h) of this section.

SECTION 8.(q) Effective Date. – This section becomes effective October 1, 2025.

PART IX. CLARIFY ELECTRICAL CODE REQUIREMENTS FOR ENERGIZING BUILDINGS

SECTION 9. G.S. 143-143.2(a) reads as rewritten:

"(a) The electric wiring of houses or buildings for lighting or for other purposes shall conform to the requirements of the North Carolina ~~State Building Code~~ Electrical Code and other applicable State and local laws."

PART X. EXTEND EXEMPTION FROM DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION OWNERSHIP OF PASSENGER MOTOR VEHICLES USED PRIMARILY FOR LAW-ENFORCEMENT, FIRE, OR EMERGENCY PURPOSES TO THE OFFICE OF THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL

SECTION 10. G.S. 143-341 reads as rewritten:

"§ 143-341. Powers and duties of Department.

The Department of Administration has the following powers and duties:

...

(8) General Services:

...

i. To establish and operate a central motor fleet and such subsidiary related facilities as the Secretary may deem necessary, and to that end:

...

3. To require on a schedule determined by the Department all State agencies to transfer ownership, custody or control of any or all passenger motor vehicles within the ownership, custody or control of that agency to the Department, except those motor ~~vehicles-vehicles~~: (i) under the ownership, custody or control of the Highway Patrol, the State Bureau of Investigation, the State Capitol Police, the Alcohol Law Enforcement Division of the Department of Public Safety, the Samarcand Training Academy, or the constituent institutions of The University of North Carolina which are used primarily for law-enforcement ~~purposes-purposes~~ or (ii) under the ownership, custody or control of the Office of the State Fire Marshal which are used primarily for law-enforcement, fire, or emergency purposes.

...."

PART XI. ENHANCE AUTHORITY OF THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL OVER LOCAL INSPECTIONS, FEES, RECORDS, AND EMERGENCY ELECTRICAL INSPECTIONS

SECTION 11.(a) G.S. 58-78A-15 reads as rewritten:

"§ 58-78A-15. State Fire Marshal to supervise local inspectors.

(a) The State Fire Marshal shall exercise general supervision over local investigators of fires and fire prevention inspectors. Whenever the State Fire Marshal has reason to believe that the local inspectors are not doing their duty, the State Fire Marshal or the State Fire Marshal's deputy shall make special trips of inspection and take proper steps to have all the provisions of the law relative to the investigation of fires and the prevention of fire waste enforced.

(b) The State Fire Marshal shall exercise general supervision over local inspection departments, including departments that issue permits for work subject to the North Carolina State Building Code. If the State Fire Marshal determines that a local inspection department has

failed to provide inspection services, ceased providing inspection services, or is otherwise failing to adequately fulfill its duties under this Chapter or Chapter 160D of the General Statutes, the State Fire Marshal shall initiate appropriate corrective actions as provided by G.S. 160D-1102(b). Such actions may include arranging alternate inspection services, suspending the local inspection department's authority, and assigning inspection duties to another jurisdiction or directly to the State. A local government whose inspection authority has been suspended under this subsection may resume providing inspection services only in accordance with the requirements set forth in G.S. 160D-1102(b). Nothing in this Chapter shall prohibit the State Fire Marshal or the State from directly performing inspection duties for any jurisdiction whose inspection department has been suspended.

(c) During any declared state of emergency or disaster, including a state emergency declared pursuant to G.S. 166A-19.20 or G.S. 166A-19.22 or a federal emergency or major disaster declared pursuant to the Stafford Act (P.L. 93-288), the State Fire Marshal shall have authority to decree alternative methods for achieving compliance with the North Carolina State Building Code and to evaluate and approve any system regulated by the North Carolina State Building Code in the State by any means necessary. During emergencies and disasters, the State Fire Marshal shall have the authority to allow persons licensed as an electrical contractor, as defined in Article 4 of Chapter 87 of the General Statutes, to evaluate and approve systems regulated by the North Carolina Electrical Code and appropriate for such license directly affected by such events."

SECTION 11.(b) G.S. 160D-402(d) reads as rewritten:

"(d) Financial Support. – The local government may appropriate for the support of the staff any funds that it deems necessary. It shall have power to fix reasonable fees for support, administration, and implementation of programs authorized by this Chapter. All fees collected by a building inspection department for the administration and enforcement of provisions set forth in Article 11 of this Chapter shall be used to support the administration and operations of the building inspection department and for no other purposes. When an inspection, for which the permit holder has paid a fee to the local government, is performed by a marketplace pool Code-enforcement official upon request of the State Fire Marshal under G.S. 143-151.12(9)a., the local government shall promptly return to the permit holder the fee collected by the local government for such inspection. Whenever an inspections department has been suspended under G.S. 58-78A-15(b), the local government shall remit all building permit, inspection, and reinspection fees collected by the local government for inspections to be conducted during the suspension period to the jurisdiction assigned to perform the inspections. This subsection applies to the following types of inspection: plumbing, electrical systems, general building restrictions and regulations, heating and air-conditioning, and the general construction of buildings."

SECTION 11.(c) G.S. 160D-1126 reads as rewritten:

"§ 160D-1126. Records and reports.

The inspection department shall keep complete and accurate records as prescribed by the Engineering Division of the Office of the State Fire Marshal in convenient form of all applications received, permits issued, inspections and reinspections made, defects found, certificates of compliance or occupancy granted, and all other work and activities of the department. These records shall be kept in the manner and for the periods prescribed by the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources. Periodic reports shall be submitted to the governing board and to the State Fire Marshal as prescribed by the Engineering Division of the Office of the State Fire Marshal and they shall by ordinance, rule, or other regulation require.

Any inspection department that fails to comply with this section shall be subject to suspension as described in G.S. 58-78A-15(b)."

SECTION 11.(d) Effective Date. – This section becomes effective July 1, 2026.

PART XII. RULEMAKING, SEVERABILITY CLAUSE, AND EFFECTIVE DATE

1 **SECTION 12.(a)** Rulemaking Authority. – The Office of the State Fire Marshal, the
2 State Fire and Rescue Commission, the North Carolina Home Inspector Licensure Board, and
3 the North Carolina Code Officials Qualification Board shall adopt rules to implement the
4 provisions of this act.

5 **SECTION 12.(b)** Severability. – If any provision of this act or the application thereof
6 to any person or circumstances is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect other provisions or
7 applications of this act that can be given effect without the invalid provision or application and,
8 to this end, the provisions of this act are declared to be severable.

9 **SECTION 12.(c)** Effective Date. – Except as otherwise provided, this act is effective
10 when it becomes law.