

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2025**

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**SENATE BILL 266
Regulatory Reform Committee Substitute Adopted 4/16/25**

Short Title: Historic Flood Event Bldg. Code Exemption.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

March 12, 2025

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO ESTABLISH EXEMPTIONS FROM CERTAIN FLOODPLAIN REQUIREMENTS FOR THE REPLACEMENT OR RECONSTRUCTION OF STRUCTURES DAMAGED BY HISTORIC FLOOD EVENTS; AND EXEMPTIONS FROM SOLID WASTE COMPOSTING RULES, STATE-ONLY STORMWATER AND SEDIMENTATION CONTROL REQUIREMENTS, STATE-ONLY AIR QUALITY PERMITS, SOIL AMENDMENT OR COMPOST PRODUCT REGISTRATION, AND FIRE CODE LIMITATIONS ON MULCH PILE STORAGE, FOR THE PROCESSING OF TREE STUMPS AND OTHER VEGETATIVE DEBRIS INTO MULCH OR SOIL AMENDMENTS IN THE COUNTIES AFFECTED BY HELENE FOR A PERIOD OF TWENTY-FOUR MONTHS.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1.(a) G.S. 143-138 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

"(e1) Exemption for Historic Flood Event. – Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, including subsection (e) of this section, the North Carolina State Building Code, any floodplain regulation established under Part 6 of Article 21 of this Chapter, a development regulation established pursuant to authority in Chapter 160D of the General Statutes, or any other local ordinance, the following shall apply:

(1) Replacement or reconstruction. – The owner of a lawfully established building or structure damaged by a historic flood event may replace or reconstruct the building or structure within the base floodplain, as defined in G.S. 143-215.52(a)(1b), to the same or lesser extent or volume existing immediately before the historic flood event, without regard to changes in State or local regulations adopted after the building or structure was lawfully established, subject to the limitation of subdivision (2) of this subsection.

(2) Limitation. – Replacement or reconstruction that increases the extent or volume of the building or structure within the base floodplain shall not be authorized unless hydrologic and hydraulic analyses, prepared in accordance with standard engineering practice by a registered design professional, demonstrate that the proposed replacement or reconstruction will not result in any increase in the base flood elevation.

(3) Definitions. – For purposes of this subsection, the following definitions apply:

a. 200-year flood. – A flood having a one-half of one percent (0.5%) probability of being equaled or exceeded in any given year, resulting in floodwater elevations higher than the base flood elevation associated with a 100-year flood.



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b. Historic flood event. – A flood event that meets or exceeds a 200-year flood."

SECTION 1.(b) G.S. 143-215.54(a) reads as rewritten:

"(a) ~~A~~ Subject to G.S. 143-138(e1) and G.S. 160D-108, a local government may adopt ordinances to regulate uses in flood hazard areas and grant permits for the use of flood hazard areas that are consistent with the requirements of this Part."

SECTION 1.(c) No later than August 1, 2025, the Department of Insurance shall prepare and submit to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for approval by that agency the proposed changes set forth in subsections (a) and (b) of this section.

SECTION 1.(d) Subsections (a) and (b) of this section become effective on the later of the following dates:

(1) October 1, 2025.

(2) The first day of a month that is 30 days after the Commissioner of Insurance certifies to the Revisor of Statutes that FEMA has approved the proposed changes set forth in subsections (a) and (b) of this section, as required by subsection (c) of this section. The Commissioner shall provide this notice along with the effective date of this act on its website.

SECTION 1.(e) The Department of Insurance shall report to the Joint Legislative Commission on Governmental Operations on the status of their activities pursuant to subsection (d) of this section quarterly, beginning September 1, 2025, until subsections (a) and (b) of this section become law.

SECTION 2.(a) The Department of Environmental Quality, the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, and a unit of local government, as applicable, shall waive all of the following requirements, to the extent the requirements are State or local in origin and not otherwise required to satisfy federal law, as they may apply to activities to process tree stumps and other vegetative debris into mulch or soil amendments in the counties designated before, on, or after the effective date of this act under a major disaster declaration by the President of the United States under the Stafford Act (P.L. 93-288) as a result of Hurricane Helene:

(1) Solid waste composting rules for Type 1 facilities under 15A NCAC 13B .1400.

(2) Stormwater and sedimentation and erosion control requirements.

(3) Air quality permit requirements for vegetative debris processing equipment under 15A NCAC 02D.

(4) Notwithstanding Article 2A of Chapter 106 of the General Statutes, and rules adopted thereunder, soil amendment or compost product registration required by the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

(5) State Fire Code limitations on mulch pile storage.

SECTION 2.(b) This section is effective when it becomes law and expires July 1, 2027.

SECTION 3. Except as otherwise provided, this act is effective when it becomes law.