



HOUSE BILL 850: Interbasin Transfer Moratorium/Study.

2025-2026 General Assembly

Committee:	House Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House	Date:	May 5, 2025
Introduced by:	Reps. Adams, Blackwell, Setzer, Greene	Prepared by:	Kyle Evans
Analysis of:	First Edition		Committee Counsel

OVERVIEW: House Bill 850 would direct the North Carolina Collaboratory at the University of North Carolina (Collaboratory) to study the current process for approving large surface water transfers between river basins and recommend changes to the General Assembly no later than the convening of the 2027 General Assembly. While the Collaboratory is conducting the study, this bill would impose a moratorium on the issuance of any approvals for surface water transfers in excess of 15 million gallons per day.

CURRENT LAW & BACKGROUND:

In 1993, the General Assembly enacted [G.S. 143-215.22L](#) to regulate large surface water transfers between river basins by requiring a certificate from the [Environmental Management Commission](#) (EMC). In general, a transfer certificate is required for a new transfer of 2 million gallons per day (MGD) or more. To date, the EMC has issued 9 certificates for interbasin transfers (IBT), ranging in volume from 12 to 33 MGD.

Currently, there are three pending applications for an IBT certificate. The Town of Mooresville began the process for obtaining an IBT certificate on September 6, 2024, to withdraw 12.6 MGD from the Catawba River Basin. Charlotte Water requested a modification to its existing IBT certificate on February 22, 2024, to withdraw a proposed additional 30 MGD from the Catawba River Basin. The Town of Fuquay-Varina began the process for obtaining an IBT certificate on September 1, 2020, to withdraw 6.12 MGD from the Cape Fear River Basin.

BILL ANALYSIS:

Section 2 would direct the Collaboratory to study the current process for approving large surface water transfers between river basins and recommend changes to the General Assembly no later than the convening of the 2027 General Assembly. The Collaboratory would be directed to consult with the Army Corps of Engineers and other relevant public/private parties on the impact that surface water transfers may have on water impoundments with respect to power generation and water supply.

Section 3 would prohibit the EMC from issuing an IBT certificate authorizing a new or modified surface water transfer of more than 15 MGD until six months after the Collaboratory completes and submits to the General Assembly the report required by Section 2.

EFFECTIVE DATE: This bill would be effective when it becomes law.

Kara McCraw
Director



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Legislative Analysis
Division
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