



HOUSE BILL 341: TS Fred Unexpended Funds/Wildfires.

2023-2024 General Assembly

Committee:	House Agriculture. If favorable, re-refer to Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House	Date:	March 15, 2023
Introduced by:	Rep. Dixon	Prepared by:	Chris Saunders
Analysis of:	First Edition		Committee Counsel

OVERVIEW: *House Bill 341 would allow the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services to spend unencumbered and unexpended funds originally appropriated to the Department for the Agricultural Crop Loss Program established to provide financial assistance to farmers affected by Tropical Storm Fred in the following amounts:*

- *\$3,200,000 for overtime and expenses related to suppression and rehabilitation actions associated with the Ferebee Road Fire in Hyde County, the Juniper Road Two Fire in Pender County, and wildfires in Robeson County.*
- *\$800,000 for anticipated fires in the spring or summer of 2023.*

CURRENT LAW AND BACKGROUND: Senate Bill 105 from the 2021 Biennium (S.L. 2021-108), in part, established an Agricultural Crop Loss Program (Program) within the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (Department) to provide financial assistance to farmers affected by Tropical Storm Fred and appropriated \$50,000,000 to the Program. The application window for the Program has closed. Any funds allocated to the Program that are not expended or encumbered by November 1, 2026, are directed to revert to the Disaster Relief and Mitigation Fund in the Department of Public Safety, Division of Emergency Management.

BILL ANALYSIS: House Bill 341 would allow the Department to spend unexpended and unencumbered funds appropriated to the Program as follows:

- \$3,200,000 for overtime and expenses related to suppression and rehabilitation actions associated with the Ferebee Road Fire in Hyde County, the Juniper Road Two Fire in Pender County, and wildfires in Robeson County.
- \$800,000 for anticipated fires in the spring or summer of 2023.

These funds will revert to the Disaster Relief and Mitigation Fund if not expended or encumbered by November 1, 2026, and the Office of State Budget and Management must report to the chairs of the House of Representatives and Senate Appropriations Committees and to the Fiscal Research Division on the expenditure of these funds.

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

Jeffrey Hudson
Director



Legislative Analysis
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