

Harnett County's Legislative Priorities

Fiscal Year 2021

Adopted February 1, 2021



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Additional Legislative Priorities

Provide Funding to Support and Establish Treatment Courts (State)

Harnett County is home to the first Veterans Treatment Court (VTC) in North Carolina. Established in 2013, the Court has helped many veterans in Harnett County and the surrounding region who struggle with substance abuse and other issues connected to their military service build fulfilling and productive lives back home. VTC accepts any qualifying veteran from across the state who has the ability to travel to the court's weekly sessions. The Court has been able to provide this service through federal grants, however grant funding is increasingly difficult to obtain. We ask for additional support for this program, as well for the reinstatement of funding for other programs such as mental health courts and drug treatment courts, which could provide assistance to residents who are not veterans but would still benefit from these programs and services.

Appropriate Recurring Funds to Support State Aid for Public Libraries (State)

Since 1941, the N.C. General Assembly has appropriated state aid funding for public libraries in North Carolina to promote and equalize public library service across the State. The Harnett County Public Library requests the restoration of state aid funding of public libraries to the pre-2011 level of \$15.7 million in recurring funding, as well as the elimination of special provisions that distribute state aid outside of the equitable formula developed by the State Library Commission. The Library also requests the appropriation of \$500,000 in recurring funding to the NC Kids Digital Library. Launched in 2017, NC Kids is a statewide eBook consortium that includes more than 37,000 eBooks, audiobooks, and streaming videos for children that align with North Carolina's summer reading program initiatives.

Increase Appropriation to Agricultural Development & Farmland Preservation Trust Fund (State)

The Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation (ADFP) Trust Fund provides payments to families for placing conservation easements on their property while still allowing the land to be used for agricultural and timber production. Due to limited funding for the program, projects have been turned down or have been only partially funded. Harnett County Soil & Water Conservation District requests increasing the annual appropriation to ADFP from \$4.3 million to \$6 million. The NCDA Farmland Preservation Office believes this appropriation will better equip ADFP based on statewide applications.