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WHEREAS, North Carolina's public beaches, inlets and waterways serve vital infrastructure functions of transportation, storm protection, commerce and recreation; and

WHEREAS, it is in the public interest to properly manage North Carolina's public beaches, inlets and waterways for the benefit of all North Carolinians; and

WHEREAS, the degradation of these public trust resources threatens the economic viability of coastal communities and counties resulting in significant reductions in State tax revenues; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has historically provided a significant share of funding to maintain North Carolina's public beaches, inlets and waterways; and

WHEREAS, continued federal partnership, including funding, is necessary to maintain North Carolina's public beaches, inlets and waterways; and

WHEREAS, other states along the Atlantic Seaboard have implemented coalitions of state and local funding that provide for the ongoing preservation, restoration, maintenance and accessibility of their beaches, inlets and coastal waterways; and

WHEREAS, in order to preserve the public's interest in North Carolina's public beaches, inlets and waterways, it is necessary to establish a comprehensive plan, including a dedicated funding source, that addresses preservation, restoration, maintenance and accessibility of these state assets;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the North Carolina Coastal Resources Commission and the North Carolina Coastal Resources Advisory Council request that their member representatives in the North Carolina General Assembly establish a legislative study commission to prepare a comprehensive plan that leads to the creation of a North Carolina Beach, Inlet and Waterway Trust Fund with an annual appropriation, to be used with federal and local matching funds for the following coastal infrastructure projects: beach nourishment; removal of structures encroaching onto public beach areas; inlet channel realignment; dredging navigation channels in inlets and waterways; and public beach, inlet and waterway access.

This comprehensive plan should include, but not be limited to the following:

1. Beach nourishment, removal of structures encroaching onto public beach areas, inlet channel realignment, dredging navigation channels in inlets and waterways, and public beach, inlet and waterway access; and
1. Potential revenue streams including state and/or local sales taxes, revenues generated from the Coastal Recreational Fishing License, or other appropriate sources, in order to provide a Permanent Trust Fund or other adequate funding for ongoing operations; and
2. A study commission membership that includes representatives of the Coastal Resources Commission, the Coastal Resources Advisory Council, the Division of Coastal Management and other private and public representatives as deemed appropriate; and
3. A 12-month timeline to complete the work of the study commission and to present a report to the General Assembly.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the North Carolina Coastal Resources Commission and the North Carolina Coastal Resources Advisory Council request that their member representatives in the North Carolina General Assembly and the Governor use all methods at the state's disposal to secure continued federal participation in coastal infrastructure projects in the state.

Adopted this 12th day of February, 2009.

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