

RESOLUTION REQUIRING TRANSPARENCY ON FEDERAL AND STATE BUDGET IMPACTS

WHEREAS, Ashe County government and public schools rely in part on federal and state funding to provide essential services; and

WHEREAS, pending and proposed actions at the federal level (including H.R.1 and related fiscal changes), initiatives such as DOGE-related reductions, and North Carolina tax policy changes may reduce revenues available to state and local governments; and

WHEREAS, these fiscal pressures may affect Ashe County's ability to maintain services beginning with the fiscal year starting July 1; and

WHEREAS, residents have a right to clear, factual information about where funding changes originate, how local budgets are affected, and how county leaders plan to respond; and

WHEREAS, transparency and proactive communication strengthen public trust during periods of budget uncertainty;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED

That the Ashe County Board of County Commissioners hereby commits to providing clear, accessible, and timely information to county residents about budget impacts resulting from federal and state government decisions.

Section 1. Public Transparency Requirements

The County Manager shall maintain publicly available information (including on the county website) that:

1. Explains major federal and state funding changes affecting Ashe County
2. Identifies which programs or services may experience fiscal pressure
3. Distinguishes the source of funding changes (federal, state, or local)
4. Provides plain-language summaries understandable to the general public
5. Outlines the County's strategies to maintain essential services where feasible

Section 2. Public Hearing

The Board of Commissioners shall hold at least one public hearing during the current budget process to:

- Present known or anticipated funding impacts
- Receive input from residents and community stakeholders

- Collect written and oral testimony from residents, service providers, educators, healthcare workers, and other community stakeholders
- Discuss potential county responses and mitigation strategies

Section 3. Public Report

Following the public briefing, the County Manager shall publish within 30 days a summary report describing:

- Key funding risks to county programs
- A summary of testimony from the public hearing
- Potential impacts on residents and services
- Quantification of impacts on county residents; including: Number of residents at risk of losing SNAP or WIC benefits; Impact on school nutrition programs; Medicaid service disruptions; Effects on public school funding and services; Impacts on county infrastructure and service delivery
- Document the real-life impacts that residents of Ashe County are experiencing due to budget uncertainty
- Planned county actions to address budget pressures

Section 4. Intergovernmental Advocacy

The County Manager Clerk shall transmit this resolution to Ashe County's state and federal legislative delegation regarding how higher-level budget decisions affect local governments.

- Publish an official statement opposing the federal cuts resulting from H.R. 1 passed by the 119th U.S. Congress
- Transmit this resolution to North Carolina's Governor, members of the state legislature representing Ashe County, and members of North Carolina's congressional delegation
- Urge state and federal officials to increase transparency about how their budget decisions affect local communities
- Coordinate with other North Carolina counties facing similar challenges to amplify advocacy efforts

ADOPTED this ____ day of _____, 2026. **BOARD CHAIR:** _____