

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2023

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HOUSE BILL 822

Short Title: Const. Amend. - Involuntary Servitude. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Buansi, T. Brown, and Charles Smith (Primary Sponsors).
For a complete list of sponsors, refer to the North Carolina General Assembly web site.

Referred to: Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House

April 19, 2023

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT TO MAKE ABSOLUTE THE PROHIBITION AGAINST INVOLUNTARY
3 SERVITUDE IN THE STATE.

4 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

5 **SECTION 1.** Section 17 of Article I of the North Carolina Constitution reads as
6 rewritten:

7 "**Sec. 17. Slavery and involuntary servitude.**

8 ~~Slavery is forever prohibited. Involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime~~
9 ~~whereof the parties have been adjudged guilty, is and involuntary servitude are forever~~
10 ~~prohibited. Nothing in this section shall prohibit an inmate from working when the inmate has~~
11 ~~been duly convicted of a crime."~~

12 **SECTION 2.** The amendment set out in Section 1 of this act shall be submitted to
13 the qualified voters of the State at the first primary election held in 2024, which election shall be
14 conducted under the laws then governing elections in the State. Ballots, voting systems, or both
15 may be used in accordance with Chapter 163 of the General Statutes. The question to be used in
16 the voting systems and ballots shall be:

17 "[] FOR [] AGAINST

18 Constitutional amendment providing that slavery and involuntary servitude is forever
19 prohibited and clarifying that work performed by inmates does not fall within the scope of the
20 prohibition."

21 **SECTION 3.** If a majority of the votes cast on the question are in favor of the
22 amendment set out in Section 1 of this act, the State Board of Elections shall certify the
23 amendment to the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State shall enroll the amendment so
24 certified among the permanent records of that office. The amendment set out in Section 1 of this
25 act becomes effective upon certification.

26 **SECTION 4.** This act is effective when it becomes law.

