

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2025**

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HOUSE BILL 249

Short Title: Diversity in Pickleball Pilot Program. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Roberson, Baker, and Logan (Primary Sponsors).
For a complete list of sponsors, refer to the North Carolina General Assembly web site.

Referred to: Appropriations, if favorable, Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House

March 3, 2025

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT TO PROVIDE FUNDS TO NORTH CAROLINA STATE UNIVERSITY FOR A
PILOT PROGRAM IN WAKE COUNTY TO INCREASE DIVERSITY IN THE GAME
OF PICKLEBALL.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Board of Governors of The University of North Carolina the nonrecurring sum of ten thousand one hundred twelve dollars (\$10,112) for the 2025-2026 fiscal year to be allocated to the Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management in the College of Natural Resources at North Carolina State University for a pilot program located in Wake County seeking to enhance diversity in the sport of pickleball. Pickleball provides important public health benefits. In older adults, pickleball has been found to help participants meet (or exceed) CDC requirements for physical activity, increase social and community connections, and contribute to psychological well-being. The sport also has the capacity to help all ages with intergenerational connections, enhance critical thinking, and facilitate social collaboration. Currently the sport is underrepresented by people of color despite it having the capacity to be multicultural and socioeconomically inclusive since it has a low cost of entry, high ease of play, and is offered through public recreational facilities. The pilot program shall consist of the following: (i) at least two focus groups with people of color to gain insight into how to best create and promote a program aimed to increase diversity among pickleball participants; (ii) creation of a branded program, including name, logo, and physical and digital marketing materials; (iii) marketing of the program, in coordination with community partners, using websites, social media, direct email, event days, and demonstrations; (iv) a four-week session held both in the fall of 2025 and the spring of 2026 at Method Road and Chavis recreation centers in Raleigh; and (v) post-program evaluation and creation of a toolkit that can be used to implement similar programs for parks and recreation departments and other community organizations across NC. Funds appropriated in this section do not revert but remain available to the Department for the purposes provided herein.

SECTION 2. This act becomes effective July 1, 2025.

