

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2025

FILED SENATE
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S.B. 322
PRINCIPAL CLERK

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SENATE BILL DRS45072-ML-84A

Short Title: Utility Worker Protection Act. (Public)

Sponsors: Senator Britt (Primary Sponsor).

Referred to:

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT TO INCREASE THE PUNISHMENT FOR COMMITTING AN ASSAULT
3 AGAINST A UTILITY OR COMMUNICATIONS WORKER.

4 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

5 **SECTION 1.** G.S. 14-33(b) reads as rewritten:

6 "(b) Unless ~~his~~the conduct is covered under some other provision of law providing greater
7 punishment, any person who commits any assault, assault and battery, or affray is guilty of a
8 Class 1 misdemeanor if, in the course of the assault, assault and battery, or affray, ~~he~~he or she
9 does any of the following:

10 ...
11 (9) Commits an assault and battery against a sports official when the sports
12 official is discharging or attempting to discharge official duties at a sports
13 event, or immediately after the sports event at which the sports official
14 discharged official duties. A "sports official" is a person at a sports event who
15 enforces the rules of the event, such as an umpire or referee, or a person who
16 supervises the participants, such as a coach. A "sports event" includes any
17 interscholastic or intramural athletic activity in a primary, middle, junior high,
18 or high school, college, or university, any organized athletic activity
19 sponsored by a community, business, or nonprofit organization, any athletic
20 activity that is a professional or semiprofessional event, and any other
21 organized athletic activity in the State.

22 (10) Assaults a utility or communications worker while the worker is (i) readily
23 identifiable as a worker and (ii) discharging or attempting to discharge his or
24 her duties. For purposes of this subdivision, the term "utility or
25 communications worker" means an employee of, agent of, or under contract
26 with an organization, entity, or company, whether State-created or privately,
27 municipally, county, or cooperatively owned, that provides electricity, natural
28 gas, telecommunications services, or internet access services. For purposes of
29 this subdivision, the term "readily identifiable as a worker" shall be construed
30 to include the worker wearing, at the time of the assault, a uniform, hat, or
31 other outerwear bearing the logo of the utility or communications company
32 for which the worker is an employee of, agent of, or under contract with."

33 **SECTION 2.** Prosecutions for offenses committed before the effective date of this
34 act are not abated or affected by this act, and the statutes that would be applicable but for this act
35 remain applicable to those prosecutions.



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1 **SECTION 3.** This act becomes effective December 1, 2025, and applies to offenses
2 committed on or after that date.