

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2009**

**SESSION LAW 2009-300
HOUSE BILL 885**

AN ACT TO PROHIBIT PERSONS FROM PICKETING DIRECTED AT A SINGLE RESIDENCE IN A MANNER THAT WOULD CAUSE FEAR OR SUBSTANTIAL EMOTIONAL DISTRESS.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. Article 35 of Chapter 14 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

"§ 14-277.4A Targeted picketing of a residence.

(a) Definitions. – As used in this section:

- (1) "Residence" means any single-family or multifamily dwelling unit that is not being used as a targeted occupant's sole place of business or as a place of public meeting.
- (2) "Targeted picketing" means picketing, with or without signs, that is specifically directed toward a residence, or one or more occupants of the residence, and that takes place on that portion of a sidewalk or street in front of the residence, in front of an adjoining residence, or on either side of the residence.

(b) It shall be unlawful for a person to engage in targeted picketing when the person knows or should know that the manner in which they are picketing would cause in a reasonable person any of the following:

- (1) Fear for the person's safety or the safety of the person's immediate family or close personal associates.
- (2) Substantial emotional distress. For the purposes of this subdivision, "substantial emotional distress" is defined as in G.S. 14-277.3A(b)(4).

(c) Any person who commits the offense defined in this section is guilty of a Class 2 misdemeanor.

(d) Any person aggrieved under this section may seek injunctive relief in a court of competent jurisdiction to prevent threatened or further violations of this section. Any violation of an injunction obtained pursuant to this section constitutes criminal contempt and shall be punishable by a term of imprisonment of not less than 30 days and no more than 12 months.

(e) Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit general picketing that proceeds through residential neighborhoods or that proceeds past residences."



SECTION 2. This act becomes effective December 1, 2009, and applies to offenses committed on or after that date.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 9th day of July, 2009.

s/ Walter H. Dalton
President of the Senate

s/ Joe Hackney
Speaker of the House of Representatives

s/ Beverly E. Perdue
Governor

Approved 5:11 p.m. this 17th day of July, 2009