

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2025

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HOUSE BILL 258
Committee Substitute Favorable 3/19/25

Short Title: Utility Worker Protection Act.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

March 4, 2025

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(c) reads as rewritten:

6 "(c) Unless 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 A1 misdemeanor if, in the course of the assault, assault and battery, or affray, ~~he or she~~he
9 or she does any of the following:

10 (1) Inflicts serious injury upon another person or uses a deadly ~~weapon~~weapon.

11 (2) Assaults a female, ~~he~~ being a male person at least 18 years of ~~age~~age.

12 (2a) Assaults a pregnant ~~woman~~woman.

13 (3) Assaults a child under the age of 12 ~~years~~years.

14 (4) Assaults an officer or employee of the State or any political subdivision of the
15 State, when the officer or employee is discharging or attempting to discharge
16 his ~~or her~~ official ~~duties~~duties.

17 ...

18 (9) Assaults a transportation network company (TNC) driver providing a
19 transportation network company (TNC) service. For the purposes of this
20 subdivision, the definitions for "TNC driver" and "TNC service" as defined in
21 G.S. 20-280.1 shall apply.

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, liquid petroleum, water, wastewater, telecommunications services, or
29 internet access services. For purposes of this subdivision, the term "readily
30 identifiable as a worker" shall be construed to include the worker wearing, at
31 the time of the assault, a uniform, hat, or other outerwear bearing the logo of
32 the utility or communications company for which the worker is an employee
33 of, agent of, or under contract with."

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



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