

1                                   A bill to be entitled  
 2           An act relating to impeding, threatening, or harassing  
 3           first responders; creating s. 843.31, F.S.; defining  
 4           the terms "first responder" and "harass"; prohibiting  
 5           a person, after receiving a warning not to approach  
 6           from a first responder who is engaged in the lawful  
 7           performance of a legal duty, to violate such warning  
 8           and approach or remain within a specified distance of  
 9           the first responder with specified intent; providing  
 10          criminal penalties; providing an effective date.

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 12 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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 14           Section 1. Section 843.31, Florida Statutes, is created to  
 15 read:

16           843.31 Approaching a first responder after a warning with  
 17 intent to impede, threaten, or harass.—

18           (1) As used in this section, the term:

19           (a) "First responder" includes a law enforcement officer  
 20 as defined in s. 943.10(1), a correctional probation officer as  
 21 defined in s. 943.10(3), a firefighter as defined in s. 784.07,  
 22 and an emergency medical care provider as defined in s. 784.07.

23           (b) "Harass" means to engage in a course of conduct  
 24 directed at a first responder which causes substantial emotional  
 25 distress in that first responder and serves no legitimate

26 purpose.

27 (2)(a) It is unlawful for a person, after receiving a  
 28 warning not to approach from a person he or she knows or  
 29 reasonably should know is a first responder, who is engaged in  
 30 the lawful performance of a legal duty, to knowingly and  
 31 willfully violate such warning and approach or remain within 20  
 32 feet of the first responder with the intent to:

33 1. Interrupt, disrupt, hinder, impede, or interfere with  
 34 the first responder's ability to perform such duty;

35 2. Threaten the first responder with physical harm; or

36 3. Harass the first responder or make so much noise that a  
 37 first responder is prevented from performing his or her official  
 38 duties or providing medical aid.

39 (b) A person who violates this subsection commits a  
 40 misdemeanor of the second degree, punishable as provided in s.  
 41 775.082 or s. 775.083.

42 Section 2. This act shall take effect October 1, 2023.