

By Senator Avila

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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, from violating such
8 warning and approaching or remaining within a
9 specified distance of the first responder with
10 specified intent; providing criminal penalties;
11 providing an effective date.

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

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

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

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

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

24 (b) "Harass" means to engage in a course of conduct
25 directed at a first responder which causes substantial emotional
26 distress in that first responder.

27 (2) (a) It is unlawful for a person, after receiving a
28 warning not to approach from a first responder who is engaged in
29 the lawful performance of a legal duty, to violate such warning

39-00061A-24

2024184__

30 and approach or remain within 14 feet of the first responder
31 with the intent to:

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

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

35 3. Harass the first responder by interfering with the first
36 responder performing such duty.

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

40 Section 2. This act shall take effect October 1, 2024.