

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2023

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HOUSE BILL 34  
Committee Substitute Favorable 2/15/23

Short Title: Protect Those Who Serve and Protect Act. (Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

January 31, 2023

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
2 AN ACT TO INCREASE THE PUNISHMENT FOR DISCHARGING OR ATTEMPTING TO  
3 DISCHARGE A FIREARM AT OR INTO AN UNOCCUPIED EMERGENCY VEHICLE  
4 AND TO INCREASE THE PUNISHMENT FOR POINTING A LASER DEVICE AT A  
5 LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER, LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY ANIMAL, OR  
6 OTHER EMERGENCY PERSONNEL WHEN THE PERSON OR ANIMAL IS IN THE  
7 PERFORMANCE OF HIS OR HER DUTIES.

8 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

9 SECTION 1. This act shall be known as the "Protect Those Who Serve and Protect  
10 Act."

11 SECTION 2. Article 8 of Chapter 14 of the General Statutes is amended by adding  
12 a new section to read:

13 "§ 14-34.1A. Discharging certain barreled weapons or a firearm at or into certain  
14 unoccupied emergency vehicles.

15 (a) Definition. – For purposes of this section, the term "emergency vehicle" means any  
16 of the following:

17 (1) A law enforcement vehicle.

18 (2) A fire department vehicle.

19 (3) A public or private ambulance.

20 (4) A rescue squad emergency service vehicle.

21 (5) A State or local emergency management vehicle.

22 (6) A vehicle owned or operated by the North Carolina National Guard.

23 (7) A vehicle owned or operated by any branch of the Armed Forces of the United  
24 States.

25 (8) A vehicle owned or operated by the Department of Adult Correction.

26 (9) A vehicle owned or operated by the Division of Juvenile Justice of the  
27 Department of Public Safety.

28 (b) Offense. – It is unlawful to willfully or wantonly discharge or attempt to discharge  
29 any firearm or barreled weapon capable of discharging shot, bullets, pellets, or other missiles at  
30 a muzzle velocity of at least 600 feet per second at or into any unoccupied emergency vehicle.

31 (c) Punishment. – Unless the conduct is covered under some other provision of law  
32 providing greater punishment, any person who violates subsection (b) of this section is guilty of  
33 a Class H felony."

34 SECTION 3. G.S. 14-34.8 reads as rewritten:

35 "§ 14-34.8. Criminal use of laser device.



1 (a) For purposes of this section, the term "laser" means light amplification by stimulated  
2 emission of radiation. The following definitions apply in this section:

3 (1) Laser. – Light amplification by stimulated emission of radiation.

4 (2) Law enforcement agency animal. – As defined in G.S. 14-163.1.

5 (3) Search and rescue animal. – As defined in G.S. 14-163.1.

6 (b) It is unlawful ~~to intentionally to point a laser device at a law enforcement officer, or~~  
7 ~~at the head or face of another person,~~ while the device is emitting a laser beam, ~~beam at:~~

8 (1) Any of the following while the person is in the performance of his or her  
9 duties:

10 a. A law enforcement officer.

11 b. A probation or parole officer.

12 c. A person whose employment duties include the custody,  
13 transportation, or management of persons who are detained or  
14 confined to a detention facility, youth development center, or  
15 correctional institution operated under the jurisdiction of the State or  
16 a local government.

17 d. A firefighter.

18 e. An emergency medical technician or other emergency health care  
19 provider.

20 f. A member of the North Carolina National Guard.

21 g. A member of any branch of the Armed Forces of the United States.

22 h. Court counselors whose employment duties include intake, probation,  
23 post-release supervision, and court supervision services of juveniles.

24 (2) The head or face of any person not covered under subdivision (1) of this  
25 subsection.

26 (3) A law enforcement agency animal or a search and rescue animal while the  
27 animal is in the performance of its duty.

28 (c) ~~A~~ A violation of subdivision (1) of subsection (b) of this section is a Class I felony.  
29 A violation of subdivision (3) of subsection (b) of this section is a Class A1 misdemeanor. Any  
30 other violation of subsection (b) of this section is an infraction.

31 (d) This section does not apply to a law enforcement officer who uses a laser device in  
32 discharging or attempting to discharge the officer's official duties. This section does not apply to  
33 a health care professional who uses a laser device in providing services within the scope of  
34 practice of that professional nor to any other person who is licensed or authorized by law to use  
35 a laser device or uses it in the performance of the person's official duties.

36 (e) This section does not apply to laser tag, paintball guns, and other similar games and  
37 devices using light emitting diode (LED) technology."

38 **SECTION 4.** This act becomes effective December 1, 2023, and applies to offenses  
39 committed on or after that date.