

By: Representatives Horan, Owen

To: Judiciary B

HOUSE BILL NO. 995

1 AN ACT TO ESTABLISH THE "FIRST RESPONDER HALO ACT OF 2025,"
2 FOR THE PURPOSE OF IMPEDING, THREATENING OR HARASSING BEHAVIOR
3 DIRECTED TOWARD FIRST RESPONDERS ENGAGED IN THE LAWFUL PERFORMANCE
4 OF A LEGAL DUTY, AFTER RECEIVING A WARNING NOT TO APPROACH; TO
5 REQUIRE INDIVIDUALS WHEN GIVEN THE WARNING TO REMAIN WITHIN A
6 DISTANCE OF 25 FEET OF THE FIRST RESPONDER; TO DEFINE TERMINOLOGY;
7 TO PRESCRIBE CRIMINAL PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS; AND FOR RELATED
8 PURPOSES.

9 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

10 **SECTION 1.** (1) As used in this section, the following terms
11 have the meanings ascribed herein, unless context clearly required
12 otherwise:

13 (a) "First responder" means state and local law
14 enforcement personnel, fire department personnel, emergency
15 medical personnel, emergency management personnel and public works
16 personnel who may be deployed to bioterrorism attacks, terrorist
17 attacks, catastrophic or natural disasters and emergencies.

18 (b) "Harass" means to willfully engage in a course of
19 conduct directed at a first responder which intentionally causes
20 substantial emotional distress in that first responder and
21 serves no legitimate purpose.



22 (2) (a) It is unlawful for a person, after receiving a
23 verbal warning not to approach from a person he or she knows or
24 reasonably should know is a first responder, who is engaged in
25 the lawful performance of a legal duty, to knowingly and
26 willfully violate such warning and approach or remain within
27 twenty-five (25) feet of the first responder with the intent to:

28 (i) Impede or interfere with the first responder's
29 ability to perform such duty;

30 (ii) Threaten the first responder with physical
31 harm; or

32 (iii) Harass the first responder.

33 (b) A person who violates this subsection shall be
34 guilty of hindering prosecution in the second degree, constituting
35 a misdemeanor as prescribed in Section 97-9-107, and punishable as
36 provided in Section 97-9-129(3).

37 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
38 and after July 1, 2025.

