

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2023

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SENATE BILL 58  
Agriculture, Energy, and Environment Committee Substitute Adopted 2/28/23

Short Title: Protect Critical Infrastructure. (Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

February 2, 2023

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
2 AN ACT TO INCREASE THE PUNISHMENT FOR PROPERTY CRIMES COMMITTED  
3 AGAINST UTILITIES, INCLUDING FACILITIES INVOLVED IN THE  
4 TRANSMISSION OF TELEPHONE, BROADBAND, OR CABLE  
5 TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICES AND FACILITIES INVOLVED IN THE  
6 PRODUCTION, STORAGE, TRANSMISSION, OR DISTRIBUTION OF ELECTRICITY,  
7 FUEL, OR ANOTHER FORM OR SOURCE OF ENERGY.

8 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

9 SECTION 1. Article 22 of Chapter 14 of the General Statutes is amended by adding  
10 a new section to read:

11 "**§ 14-150.2. Injuring energy facility.**

12 (a) Definition. – For purposes of this section, the term "energy facility" means any facility  
13 involved in (i) the production, storage, transmission, or distribution of electricity, fuel, or another  
14 form or source of energy or (ii) research, development, or demonstration related to the  
15 production, storage, transmission, or distribution of electricity, fuel, or another form or source of  
16 energy. This term includes any:

- 17 (1) Facility in operation, under construction, or otherwise not functioning; and  
18 (2) Line, wire, pipe, or other property or equipment used as part of the normal  
19 operation of the facility.

20 (b) Offense. – It is unlawful to knowingly and willfully destroy, injure, or otherwise  
21 damage, or attempt to destroy, injure, or otherwise damage, an energy facility.

22 (c) Punishment. – A person who violates subsection (b) of this section is guilty of a Class  
23 C felony, except that a violation that results in the death of another is a Class B2 felony.  
24 Additionally, a person who violates subsection (b) of this section shall be ordered to pay a fine  
25 of two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000).

26 (d) Merger. – Each violation of this section constitutes a separate offense and shall not  
27 merge with any other offense.

28 (e) Civil Liability. – Any person whose property or person is injured by reason of a  
29 violation of this section may sue for and recover treble damages, costs, and attorneys' fees from  
30 the person who committed the violation of this section and any person who acts as an accessory  
31 before or after the fact, aids or abets, solicits, conspires, or lends material support to the violation  
32 of this section. The rights and remedies provided by this subsection are in addition to any other  
33 rights and remedies provided by law. For purposes of this subsection, the term "damages"  
34 includes actual and consequential damages."

35 SECTION 2. G.S. 14-159.12 reads as rewritten:

36 "**§ 14-159.12. First degree trespass.**



- 1 (a) Offense. – A person commits the offense of first degree trespass if, without  
2 authorization, ~~he~~the person enters or ~~remains;remains on or in any of the following:~~
- 3 (1) ~~On~~The premises of another so enclosed or secured as to demonstrate clearly  
4 an intent to keep out ~~intruders;~~intruders.
- 5 (2) ~~In a~~The building of ~~another; or~~another.
- 6 (3) ~~On the~~The lands of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians after the person has  
7 been excluded by a resolution passed by the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indian  
8 Tribal Council.
- 9 ...
- 10 (c) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (d) of this section, a violation of  
11 subsection (a) of this section is a Class ~~A1 misdemeanor~~I felony if all of the following  
12 circumstances exist:
- 13 (1) The offense is committed on the premises of any of the following:
- 14 a. ~~A facility that is owned or operated by an electric power supplier as~~  
15 ~~defined in G.S. 62-133.8(a)(3) and that is either an electric generation~~  
16 ~~facility, a transmission substation, a transmission switching station, a~~  
17 ~~transmission switching structure, or a control center used to manage~~  
18 ~~transmission operations or electrical power generating at multiple~~  
19 ~~plant locations.~~
- 20 b. Any facility used or available for use in the collection, treatment,  
21 testing, storing, pumping, or distribution of water for a public water  
22 system.
- 23 c. ~~Any facility, including any liquefied natural gas storage facility or~~  
24 ~~propane air facility, that is owned or operated by a natural gas local~~  
25 ~~distribution company, natural gas pipeline carrier operating under a~~  
26 ~~certificate of public convenience and necessity from the Utilities~~  
27 ~~Commission, municipal corporation operating a municipally owned~~  
28 ~~gas distribution system, or regional natural gas district organized and~~  
29 ~~operated pursuant to Article 28 of Chapter 160A of the General~~  
30 ~~Statutes used for transmission, distribution, measurement, testing,~~  
31 ~~regulating, compression, control, or storage of natural gas.~~
- 32 d. Any facility used or operated for agricultural activities, as that term is  
33 defined in G.S. 106-581.1.
- 34 e. Any facility involved in the production, storage, transmission, or  
35 distribution of electricity, fuel, or another form or source of energy, or  
36 research, development, or demonstration facilities related thereto,  
37 regardless of whether the facility is under construction or is otherwise  
38 not functioning.
- 39 f. A facility owned by a public utility, as that term is defined under  
40 G.S. 62-3, or a unit of local government, used for the treatment of  
41 wastewater, including sewage, industrial waste, or other wastes of a  
42 liquid nature.
- 43 (2) The person actually entered a building, or it was necessary for the person to  
44 climb over, go under, or otherwise surmount a fence or other barrier to reach  
45 the facility.
- 46 (d) If, in addition to the circumstances set out in subsection (c) of this section, the  
47 violation also includes any of the following elements, then the offense is a Class ~~H~~G felony:
- 48 (1) The offense is committed with the intent to disrupt the normal operation of  
49 any of the facilities described in subdivision (1) of subsection (c) of this  
50 section.

1 (2) The offense involves an act that places either the offender or others on the  
2 premises at risk of serious bodily injury.

3 ...."

4 **SECTION 3.** G.S. 14-154 reads as rewritten:

5 "**§ 14-154. Injuring wires and other fixtures of ~~telephone, telegraph, and electric power~~**  
6 **~~telephone and broadband~~ companies.**

7 If any person shall willfully injure, ~~destroy~~ destroy, or pull down any ~~telegraph, telephone,~~  
8 ~~telephone, broadband, or cable telecommunications,~~ or ~~electric power transmission~~  
9 ~~telecommunications~~ pedestal or pole, or any ~~telegraph, telephone, cable telecommunications, or~~  
10 ~~electric power line, wire or fiber insulator, power supply, transformer, transmission or other~~  
11 ~~apparatus, equipment~~ equipment, or fixture used in the transmission of ~~telegraph, telephone,~~  
12 ~~cable telecommunications, or electrical power service~~ telephone, broadband, or cable  
13 telecommunications, or any ~~equipment~~ apparatus, equipment, or fixture related to wireless  
14 communications regulated by the Federal Communications Commission, that person shall be  
15 guilty of a Class ~~I~~ Felony-C felony."

16 **SECTION 4.** G.S. 14-152 and G.S. 14-156 are repealed.

17 **SECTION 5.** G.S. 62-323 reads as rewritten:

18 "**§ 62-323. Willful injury to property of public utility a ~~misdemeanor~~-felony.**

19 If any person shall willfully do or cause to be done any act or acts whatever whereby any  
20 building, construction or work of any public utility, or any engine, machine or structure or any  
21 matter or thing appertaining to the same shall be stopped, obstructed, impaired, weakened,  
22 injured or destroyed, ~~he~~ the person shall be guilty of a Class ~~I~~ misdemeanor-C felony."

23 **SECTION 6.** Prosecutions for offenses committed before the effective date of this  
24 act are not abated or affected by this act, and the statutes that would be applicable but for this act  
25 remain applicable to those prosecutions.

26 **SECTION 7.** This act becomes effective December 1, 2023, and applies to offenses  
27 committed on or after that date.