

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2025

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SENATE BILL 985

Short Title: HALO Law.

(Public)

Sponsors: Senator Measmer (Primary Sponsor).

Referred to: Rules and Operations of the Senate

May 4, 2026

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
2 AN ACT TO ESTABLISH A SAFETY BUFFER AROUND FIRST RESPONDERS WHILE  
3 THEY ARE IN THE LAWFUL PERFORMANCE OF THEIR DUTIES.

4 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

5 **SECTION 1.** This act shall be known as "The Honoring and Listening to Our  
6 Officers (HALO) Law."

7 **SECTION 2.** Article 30 of Chapter 14 of the General Statutes is amended by adding  
8 a new section to read:

9 "**§ 14-223.1. Approaching a first responder with specified intent after a warning.**

10 (a) Definitions. – For purposes of this section, the following definitions apply:

11 (1) First responder. – Means any of the following:

12 a. A law enforcement officer.

13 b. A firefighter.

14 c. An emergency medical technician or a medical responder.

15 d. A probation or parole officer.

16 e. A person whose employment duties include the custody,  
17 transportation, or management of persons who are detained or  
18 confined to a detention facility, youth development center, or  
19 correctional institution operated under the jurisdiction of the State or  
20 a local government.

21 (2) Harass. – To willfully engage in a course of conduct directed at a first  
22 responder which intentionally causes substantial emotional distress in that  
23 first responder and serves no legitimate purpose.

24 (b) Offense. – It is unlawful for a person, after receiving a verbal warning not to approach  
25 from a person he or she knows or reasonably should know is a first responder, who is engaged in  
26 the lawful performance of a legal duty, to knowingly and willfully violate the warning and  
27 approach or remain within 25 feet of the first responder with the intent to do any of the following:

28 (1) Impede or interfere with the first responder's ability to perform his or her duty.

29 (2) Threaten the first responder with physical harm.

30 (3) Harass the first responder.

31 (c) Punishment. – Unless the conduct is covered under some other provision of law  
32 providing greater punishment, a person who violates subsection (b) of this section is guilty of a  
33 Class 2 misdemeanor."

34 **SECTION 3.** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of  
35 Public Safety the sum of twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) in nonrecurring funds for the  
36 2026-2027 fiscal year to be used for costs incurred by the Department from developing and



1 implementing a marketing campaign to make the public aware of G.S. 14-223.1, as enacted by  
2 Section 2 of this act.  
3         **SECTION 4.** Section 2 of this act becomes effective December 1, 2026, and applies  
4 to offenses committed on or after that date. The remainder of this act becomes effective July 1,  
5 2026.