

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2023

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SENATE BILL 58

Short Title: Protect Critical Infrastructure. (Public)

Sponsors: Senators McInnis, Britt, and P. Newton (Primary Sponsors).

Referred to: Rules and Operations of the Senate

February 2, 2023

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO INCREASE THE PUNISHMENT FOR PROPERTY CRIMES COMMITTED AGAINST FACILITIES INVOLVED IN THE TRANSMISSION OF TELEPHONE, BROADBAND, OR CABLE TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICES AND FACILITIES INVOLVED IN THE PRODUCTION, STORAGE, TRANSMISSION, OR DISTRIBUTION OF ELECTRICITY, FUEL, OR ANOTHER FORM OR SOURCE OF ENERGY.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

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

"§ 14-150.2. Injuring energy facility.

(a) Definition. – For purposes of this section, the term "energy facility" means any facility involved in the production, storage, transmission, or distribution of electricity, fuel, or another form or source of energy, or research, development, or demonstration facilities related thereto, regardless of whether the facility is under construction or is otherwise not functioning. This term includes any line, wire, pipe, or other property or equipment used as part of the normal operation of the facility.

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

(c) Punishment. – A person who violates subsection (b) of this section is guilty of a Class C felony. Additionally, a person who violates subsection (b) of this section shall be ordered to pay a fine of two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000).

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

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

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

"§ 14-159.12. First degree trespass.

(a) Offense. – A person commits the offense of first degree trespass if, without authorization, ~~he~~ the person enters or remains; remains on or in any of the following:



- 1 (1) ~~On~~The premises of another so enclosed or secured as to demonstrate clearly
- 2 an intent to keep out ~~intruders;~~intruders.
- 3 (2) ~~In a~~The building of ~~another;~~ or another.
- 4 (3) ~~On the~~The lands of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians after the person has
- 5 been excluded by a resolution passed by the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indian
- 6 Tribal Council.

7 ...

8 (c) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (d) of this section, a violation of

9 subsection (a) of this section is a Class ~~A1 misdemeanor~~I felony if all of the following

10 circumstances exist:

- 11 (1) The offense is committed on the premises of any of the following:
 - 12 a. ~~A facility that is owned or operated by an electric power supplier as~~
 - 13 ~~defined in G.S. 62-133.8(a)(3) and that is either an electric generation~~
 - 14 ~~facility, a transmission substation, a transmission switching station, a~~
 - 15 ~~transmission switching structure, or a control center used to manage~~
 - 16 ~~transmission operations or electrical power generating at multiple~~
 - 17 ~~plant locations.~~
 - 18 b. Any facility used or available for use in the collection, treatment,
 - 19 testing, storing, pumping, or distribution of water for a public water
 - 20 system.
 - 21 c. ~~Any facility, including any liquefied natural gas storage facility or~~
 - 22 ~~propane air facility, that is owned or operated by a natural gas local~~
 - 23 ~~distribution company, natural gas pipeline carrier operating under a~~
 - 24 ~~certificate of public convenience and necessity from the Utilities~~
 - 25 ~~Commission, municipal corporation operating a municipally owned~~
 - 26 ~~gas distribution system, or regional natural gas district organized and~~
 - 27 ~~operated pursuant to Article 28 of Chapter 160A of the General~~
 - 28 ~~Statutes used for transmission, distribution, measurement, testing,~~
 - 29 ~~regulating, compression, control, or storage of natural gas.~~
 - 30 d. Any facility used or operated for agricultural activities, as that term is
 - 31 defined in G.S. 106-581.1.
 - 32 e. Any facility involved in the production, storage, transmission, or
 - 33 distribution of electricity, fuel, or another form or source of energy, or
 - 34 research, development, or demonstration facilities related thereto,
 - 35 regardless of whether the facility is under construction or is otherwise
 - 36 not functioning.

37 (2) The person actually entered a building, or it was necessary for the person to

38 climb over, go under, or otherwise surmount a fence or other barrier to reach

39 the facility.

40 (d) If, in addition to the circumstances set out in subsection (c) of this section, the

41 violation also includes any of the following elements, then the offense is a Class ~~H~~G felony:

- 42 (1) The offense is committed with the intent to disrupt the normal operation of
- 43 any of the facilities described in subdivision (1) of subsection (c) of this
- 44 section.
- 45 (2) The offense involves an act that places either the offender or others on the
- 46 premises at risk of serious bodily injury.

47 "

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

49 "**§ 14-154. Injuring wires and other fixtures of ~~telephone, telegraph, and electric power~~**

50 **telephone and broadband companies.**

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

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

11 **SECTION 5.** Prosecutions for offenses committed before the effective date of this
12 act are not abated or affected by this act, and the statutes that would be applicable but for this act
13 remain applicable to those prosecutions.

14 **SECTION 6.** This act becomes effective December 1, 2023, and applies to offenses
15 committed on or after that date.