

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA

SESSION 1991

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HOUSE BILL 1082
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Short Title: Landowner Protection.

(Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Anderson; Bowman, McLawhorn, and Warner.

Referred to: Judiciary II.

April 24, 1991

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT TO LIMIT THE LIABILITY OF LANDOWNERS TO MEMBERS OF THE
3 PUBLIC ENTERING THE LAND FOR EDUCATIONAL AND RECREATIONAL
4 PURPOSES.

5 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

6 Section 1. The General Statutes are amended by adding a new Chapter to
7 read:

8 **"CHAPTER 38A.**
9 **"LANDOWNER LIABILITY.**

10 **"§ 38A-1. Purpose.**

11 The purpose of this Chapter is to encourage owners of land to make land and water
12 areas available to the public for educational and recreational purposes by:

- 13 (1) Limiting the liability of the owner to persons entering the land for
14 those purposes;
15 (2) Ensuring that through making one's land available for educational and
16 recreational purposes, an owner need not be subjected to waste or a
17 financial burden; and
18 (3) Providing a mechanism by which owners of land may be compensated
19 for expenditures incurred in defense against frivolous or purposeless
20 suits arising from the use of their land.

21 **"§ 38A-2. Definitions.**

22 The following definitions shall apply throughout this Chapter, unless otherwise
23 specified:

- 1 (1) 'Charge' means a price or fee asked for services, entertainment,
2 recreation performed, or products offered for sale on land or in return
3 for an invitation or permission to enter upon land, except as otherwise
4 excluded in this Chapter.
- 5 (2) 'Educational purpose' means any activity undertaken as part of a
6 formal or informal educational program, and viewing historical,
7 natural, archaeological, or scientific sites.
- 8 (3) 'Land' means real property, land, and water, other than any real
9 property, land, and water that are appurtenant to a private residence
- 10 (4) 'Owner' means any individual, legal entity, or governmental entity, and
11 any employee or agent, that has any fee or security.
- 12 (5) 'Recreational purpose' means any activity undertaken for recreation,
13 exercise, education, relaxation, refreshment, diversion, or pleasure.

14 **"§ 38A-3. Exclusions.**

15 For purposes of this act, the term 'charge' does not include:

- 16 (1) Unless otherwise agreed in writing, any lease, dedication, license, or
17 easement, or the proceeds thereof, by an owner of land to a nonprofit
18 organization or governmental entity for educational or recreational
19 purposes.
- 20 (2) Any action taken by a person, legal entity, nonprofit organization or
21 governmental entity other than the owner, or any monetary
22 contribution made, in either event, whether or not sanctioned or
23 solicited by the owner, the purpose of which is to (i) improve access to
24 land for educational or recreational purposes; (ii) remedy damage to
25 land caused by educational or recreational use; or (iii) provide warning
26 of hazards on, or remove hazards from, land used for educational or
27 recreational purposes.
- 28 (3) Unless otherwise agreed in writing or otherwise provided by the State
29 or federal tax codes, any property tax abatement or relief received by
30 the owner from the State or local taxing authority in exchange for the
31 owner's agreement to open the land for educational or recreational
32 purposes.
- 33 (4) Unless otherwise agreed in writing, any contribution in kind, services
34 or cash paid to reduce or offset costs and eliminate losses from
35 educational or recreational use.

36 **"§ 38A-4. Limitation of liability.**

37 Except as specifically recognized by or provided for in this act, an owner of land
38 who either directly or indirectly invites or permits without charge any person to use
39 such land for educational or recreational purposes owes the person the same duty of care
40 that he owes a trespasser."

41 Sec. 2. This act is effective Oct 1, 1991 and applies to all causes of action
42 arising after that date.