

2025 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 80

BY REPRESENTATIVE DEWITT

Prefiled pursuant to Article III, Section 2(A)(4)(b)(i) of the Constitution of Louisiana.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS: Provides relative to first responders

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 23:1017.1(6) and R.S. 29:739(C) and to enact R.S. 29:723(20),
3 relative to first responders; to expand the definition of "first responder" to include
4 electrical linemen; to provide for the definition of "electrical lineman"; to provide
5 for an effective date; and to provide for related matters.

6 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

7 Section 1. R.S. 23:1017.1(6) is hereby amended and reenacted to read as follows:

8 §1017.1. Definitions

9 Unless the context clearly indicates otherwise, the following words and
10 terms, when used in this Part, shall have the following meanings:

11 * * *

12 (6) "First responder" means a volunteer engaged in activities involving the
13 Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness pursuant to
14 R.S. 29:721 et seq., and first responders as defined in R.S. 29:723 including but not
15 limited to medical personnel, emergency and medical technicians, volunteer firemen,
16 auxiliary law enforcement officers, state agency essential workers, emergency
17 service dispatchers, ~~and~~ emergency response operators, electrical linemen as defined
18 by R.S. 29:723, and members of the Civil Air Patrol.

19 * * *

1 Section 2. R.S. 29:739(C) is hereby amended and reenacted and R.S. 29:723(20) is
2 hereby enacted to read as follows:

3 §723. Definitions

4 As used in this Chapter:

5 * * *

6 (20)(a) "Electrical lineman" means a person employed to install, maintain,
7 or repair electrical transmission and power distribution systems, and who, based
8 solely on employment as an electrical lineman, shall not be entitled to compensation,
9 pension, or other benefits paid by the state or a political subdivision of the state.
10 Electrical linemen shall be considered first responders only in instances involving
11 weather emergencies as declared by the governor pursuant to R.S. 29:721 et seq.

12 (b) Nothing in this Subsection shall relieve an employer of its
13 responsibilities pursuant to Civil Code Article 2320.

14 (c) The term "first responder" may be displayed on the uniform of an
15 electrical lineman, but electrical linemen shall be considered private sector
16 employees who are not governed by the state or any local governmental subdivision
17 of the state.

18 * * *

19 §739. Intrastate Mutual Aid Compact

20 * * *

21 C. Definitions

22 As used in this Section, "first responder" refers to those individuals who in
23 the early stages of an incident are responsible for the protection and preservation of
24 life, property, evidence, and the environment, including emergency response
25 providers as defined in Section 2 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C.
26 101), as well as emergency management, public health, clinical care, public works,
27 and other skilled support personnel, such as equipment operators and electrical

1 linemen that provide immediate support services during prevention, response, and recovery
2 operations consistent with Homeland Security Presidential Directive 8.

3 * * *

4 Section 2. The Louisiana State Law Institute is hereby authorized and directed to
5 renumber the definitions in R.S. 29:723 to ensure that the definitions are in alphabetical
6 order.

7 Section 3. This Act shall become effective upon signature by the governor or, if not
8 signed by the governor, upon expiration of the time for bills to become law without signature
9 by the governor, as provided by Article III, Section 18 of the Constitution of Louisiana. If
10 vetoed by the governor and subsequently approved by the legislature, this Act shall become
11 effective on the day following such approval.

DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

HB 80 Original

2025 Regular Session

Dewitt

Abstract: Expands the definition of "first responder" to include electrical linemen and defines "electrical lineman".

Present law with regard to the Louisiana Homeland Security and Emergency Assistance and Disaster Act, defines "first responder" as a volunteer engaged in activities involving the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness pursuant to R.S. 29:721 et seq., and first responders as defined in R.S. 29:723, including medical personnel, emergency and medical technicians, volunteer firemen, auxiliary law enforcement officers, state agency essential workers, emergency service dispatchers, and emergency response operators, and members of the Civil Air Patrol.

Present law provides that "first responder" refers to those individuals who in the early stages of an incident are responsible for the protection and preservation of life, property, evidence, and the environment, as well as emergency management, public health, clinical care, public works, and other skilled support personnel, such as equipment operators that provide immediate support services during prevention, response, and recovery operations consistent with Homeland Security Presidential Directive 8.

Proposed law includes electrical linemen in the definition of "first responder".

Proposed law defines "electrical lineman" as a person employed to install, maintain, or repair electrical transmission and power distribution systems for the purpose of being allowed first access to the scene of an emergency and not for purposes of monetary or health benefits.

Proposed law provides that electrical linemen shall be considered first responders only during weather emergencies as declared by the governor pursuant to R.S. 29:721 et seq.

Provides further that nothing in proposed law shall relieve an employer of its responsibilities pursuant to C.C. Art. 2320.

Proposed law provides that the term "first responder" may be displayed on the uniform of an electrical lineman, but electrical linemen shall be considered private sector employees who are not governed by the state or any local governmental subdivision of the state.

Proposed law includes electrical linemen as other skilled support personnel for purposes of the Intrastate Mutual Aid Compact.

Effective upon signature of governor or lapse of time for gubernatorial action.

(Amends R.S. 23:1017.1(6) and R.S. 29:739(C); Adds R.S. 29:723(20))