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## DIGEST

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HB 80 Engrossed

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))