



This Bill Analysis reflects the contents of the bill as it was presented in committee.

HOUSE BILL 52: Protect Those Who Serve & Protect Act of 2025.

2025-2026 General Assembly

Committee:	House Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House	Date:	March 10, 2025
Introduced by:	Reps. Hastings, Cotham, Miller, Pyrtle	Prepared by:	Susan Sitze Staff Attorney
Analysis of:	Third Edition		

OVERVIEW: House Bill 52 would enact the "Protect Those Who Serve and Protect Act of 2025" and would do the following:

- Create a new Class I felony for assault on a public safety officer, law enforcement agency animal, or search and rescue animal by throwing, spraying or otherwise projecting water or other substances.
- Amend several offenses related to assaulting a public safety officer when performing their duties, to include assault against a public safety officer because of their status as a public safety officer.
- Increase the penalty for assault with a firearm on a law enforcement officer.

BILL ANALYSIS:

Section 1 would provide that this act be known as the "Protect Those Who Serve and Protect Act of 2025."

Section 2 would create a new Class I felony offense for assaulting a public safety officer, law enforcement agency animal or search and rescue animal by throwing, spraying, or otherwise projecting water or other substances. The offense would apply if the assault occurred either while the officer or animal was discharging their official duties, or because of the victim's status as an officer or law enforcement or search and rescue animal.

This statute would also create a definition of "public safety officer" that would include the following:

- A law enforcement officer
- A probation or parole officer
- A person employed by a detention facility
- A telecommunicator
- A firefighter or rescue squad worker
- Emergency services personnel
- Hospital and medical employees
- Members of the North Carolina National Guard
- Members of the U.S. Armed Forces
- Juvenile court counselors

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- Emergency management workers

Section 3 would amend G.S. 14-24.8 (Criminal use of laser device) to apply to public safety officers as defined in G.S. 14-34.7A and would also apply that offense to acts committed because of the person's status as a public safety officer.

Section 4 would amend G.S. 14-32(d) and (e) (Felonious assault with deadly weapon with intent to kill or inflicting serious injury) to apply to public safety officers as defined in G.S. 14-34.7A unless the offense is covered under some other provision of law providing greater punishment.

Section 5 would amend G.S. 14-33(c)(4) (Misdemeanor assault on an officer) to apply to acts committed because of the person's status as one of the covered persons.

Section 6 would amend G.S. 14-34.2 (Assault with a firearm or other deadly weapon upon governmental officers or employees, company police officers, or campus police officers) to apply to acts committed because of the person's status as one of the covered persons.

Section 7 would amend G.S. 14-34.5 (Assault with a firearm on law enforcement, etc.) to apply to public safety officers as defined in G.S. 14-34.7A and would also apply that offense to acts committed because of the person's status as a public safety officer. This section would also increase the penalty for this offense to a Class C felony.

Section 8 would repeal G.S. 14-34.6 (Assault or affray on a firefighter, an emergency medical technician, medical responder, and medical practice and hospital personnel.) Pursuant to Section 9 of this act, those personnel would be included in G.S. 14-34.7.

Section 9 would amend G.S. 14-34.7 (Certain assaults on law enforcement, etc.) to apply to public safety officers as defined in G.S. 14-34.7A and would also apply that offense to acts committed because of the person's status as a public safety officer.

Section 10 would amend G.S. 14-69.3 (Arson or other unlawful burning that results in serious bodily injury or serious injury to certain personnel) to apply to public safety officers as defined in G.S. 14-34.7A and would also apply that offense to acts committed because of the person's status as a public safety officer unless covered under some other provision of law providing greater punishment.

Section 11 would make conforming changes to G.S. 15A-266.3A in the list of offense requiring DNA samples to be taken.

Section 12 would make a conforming change to a required report made annually by the Administrative Office of the Courts.

EFFECTIVE DATE: This act would become effective December 1, 2025, and apply to offenses committed on or after that date.

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For ease of understanding, the following chart represents the offenses, victim classification, and offense levels as amended by this bill:

Statute & Bill Section	Offense	Applies To	Penalty
14-32(d) [Section 4]	Assault w/ Deadly Weapon Inflict Serious Injury	Public safety officer	Class D Felony
14-32(e) [Section 4]	Assault w/ Deadly Weapon Intent to Kill	Public safety officer	Class D Felony
14-33(c)(4) [Section 5]	Assault	Officer or employee of the State or local government	Class A1 Misdemeanor
14-34.2 [Section 6]	Assault with firearm or other deadly weapon	- Officer or employee of the State or local government - company police officer - campus police officer	Class E felony
14-34.5 [Section 7]	Assault with a firearm	Public safety officer	Class C felony
14-34.7 [Section 9]	Assault or Affray	Public safety officer	Class E felony
14-34.7A [Section 2]	Assault by throwing water or other substance	- Public safety officer - law enforcement animal - search and rescue animal	Class I felony
14-34.8 [Section 3]	Criminal use of laser device	- Public safety officer - law enforcement animal - search and rescue animal - any other person if pointed at head or face	Public safety officer – Class I felony Law enforcement animal or search and rescue animal – Class A1 misdemeanor IF the animal is caused "harm" Any other violation - Infraction
14-69.3(b) [Section 10]	Arson resulting in serious bodily injury	Public safety officer or fire investigator	Class E felony
14-69.3(c) [Section 10]	Arson resulting in serious injury	Public safety officer or fire investigator	Class F felony