

House Bill 483 (AS PASSED HOUSE AND SENATE)

By: Representatives Prince of the 132nd, Leverett of the 123rd, Smith of the 18th, Reeves of the 99th, Roberts of the 52nd, and others

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Article 2 of Chapter 5 of Title 16 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,
2 relating to assault and battery, so as to provide for protections for code enforcement officials;
3 to provide for a definition; to provide for enhanced penalties for simple assault, aggravated
4 assault, simple battery, battery, and aggravated battery committed upon code enforcement
5 officials in certain circumstances; to provide for related matters; to provide for an effective
6 date and applicability; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

7 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

8 **SECTION 1.**

9 Article 2 of Chapter 5 of Title 16 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to
10 assault and battery, is amended by revising Code Section 16-5-19, relating to definitions, as
11 follows:

12 "16-5-19.

13 As used in this article, the term:

14 "(1) 'Code enforcement official' means any person with a high school diploma or
15 equivalent who has completed Level 1 code enforcement training under a professional
16 program and is employed by or under contract with a municipality, city, county, or

17 consolidated government who performs safety inspections of buildings, structures,
 18 businesses, or real property to ensure they are operated in accordance with the law.

19 ~~(1)~~(2) 'Correctional officer' means any person who is authorized to exercise the power
 20 of arrest and who is employed or appointed by the Department of Corrections or the State
 21 Board of Pardons and Paroles.

22 ~~(2)~~(3) 'Emergency health worker' means hospital emergency department personnel and
 23 emergency medical services personnel.

24 ~~(3)~~(4) 'Firefighter' shall have the same meaning as set forth in Code Section 25-4-2.

25 ~~(3.1)~~(5) 'Healthcare worker' means any employee or independent contractor of a hospital
 26 or other healthcare facility licensed pursuant to Chapter 7 of Title 31.

27 ~~(4)~~(6) 'Highway emergency response operator' means ~~an individual~~ a person employed
 28 by the Department of Transportation who operates a towing or recovery vehicle or
 29 highway maintenance vehicle.

30 ~~(5)~~(7) 'Jail officer' means any person who is employed or appointed by a county or a
 31 municipality and who has the responsibility of supervising inmates who are confined in
 32 a municipal or county detention facility.

33 ~~(6)~~(8) 'Juvenile correctional officer' means any person employed or appointed by the
 34 Department of Juvenile Justice who has the primary responsibility for the supervision and
 35 control of youth confined in its programs and facilities.

36 ~~(7)~~(9) 'Officer of the court' means a judge, attorney, clerk of court, deputy clerk of court,
 37 court reporter, or court interpreter.

38 ~~(8)~~(10) 'Probation officer' means a community supervision officer, county or Department
 39 of Juvenile Justice juvenile probation officer, or probation officer serving pursuant to
 40 Article 6 of Chapter 8 of Title 42.

41 ~~(9)~~(11) 'Public safety officer' means peace officer, correctional officer, emergency health
 42 worker, firefighter, highway emergency response operator, jail officer, juvenile
 43 correctional officer, or probation officer.

44 ~~(10)~~(12) 'Public transit vehicle' shall have the same meaning as set forth in Code
45 Section 16-5-20.

46 ~~(11)~~(13) 'Strangulation' means impeding the normal breathing or circulation of blood of
47 another person by applying pressure to the throat or neck of such person or by obstructing
48 the nose and mouth of such person.

49 ~~(12)~~(14) 'Utility worker' means any employee of, including any person employed by or
50 under contract with, an organization, entity, or company, whether a state created authority
51 or privately, municipally, county, or cooperatively owned, that provides gas, heat,
52 electricity, water, telecommunications services, sewer services, cable or video services,
53 internet services, or railroad services."

54 **SECTION 2.**

55 Said article is further amended by revising subsection (i) of Code Section 16-5-20, relating
56 to simple assault, as follows:

57 "(i) Any person who commits the offense of simple assault upon a utility worker or code
58 enforcement official while such worker or official is acting within the course and scope of
59 his or her employment or is performing official duties at the time of the offense shall, upon
60 conviction thereof, be punished for a misdemeanor of a high and aggravated nature."

61 **SECTION 3.**

62 Said article is further amended by revising subsection (m) of Code Section 16-5-21, relating
63 to aggravated assault, as follows:

64 "(m) Any person who commits the offense of aggravated assault upon a utility worker or
65 code enforcement official while such worker or official is acting within the course and
66 scope of his or her employment or is performing official duties shall, upon conviction
67 thereof, be punished by imprisonment for not less than three nor more than 20 years."

68 **SECTION 4.**

69 Said article is further amended by revising subsection (j) of Code Section 16-5-23, relating
70 to simple battery, as follows:

71 "(j) Any person who commits the offense of simple battery upon a utility worker or code
72 enforcement official while such worker or official is acting within the course and scope of
73 his or her employment or is performing official duties at the time of the offense shall, upon
74 conviction thereof, be punished for a misdemeanor of a high and aggravated nature."

75 **SECTION 5.**

76 Said article is further amended by revising subsection (l) of Code Section 16-5-23.1, relating
77 to battery, as follows:

78 "(l) Any person who commits the offense of battery upon a utility worker or code
79 enforcement official while such worker or official is acting within the course and scope of
80 his or her employment or is performing official duties at the time of the offense shall, upon
81 conviction thereof, be punished for a misdemeanor of a high and aggravated nature."

82 **SECTION 6.**

83 Said article is further amended by revising subsection (i) of Code Section 16-5-24, relating
84 to aggravated battery, as follows:

85 "(i) Any person who commits the offense of aggravated battery upon a utility worker or
86 code enforcement official while such worker or official is acting within the course and
87 scope of his or her employment or is performing official duties at the time of the offense
88 shall, upon conviction thereof, be punished by imprisonment for not less than three nor
89 more than 20 years."

90 **SECTION 7.**

91 This Act shall become effective upon its approval by the Governor or upon its becoming law
92 without such approval and shall apply to all offenses committed on or after July 1, 2026.

93 **SECTION 8.**

94 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.