

ACT NO. ____

HOUSE BILL NO. ____

By Representative ____

AN ACT

To enact R.S. 40:1231.____, relative to emergency medical services; to recognize Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics as first responders; to provide legislative findings; to provide definitions; to ensure inclusion of emergency medical services personnel in laws, programs, and policies applicable to first responders; and to provide for related matters.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF LOUISIANA:

Section 1. Legislative Findings

The legislature hereby finds and declares that Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics provide essential prehospital medical care; are frequently the first medical professionals to arrive at the scene of emergencies; operate in hazardous and unpredictable environments; and are exposed to occupational risks comparable to those faced by firefighters and law enforcement officers. Formal recognition as first responders is necessary to ensure consistency in public policy and statutory interpretation.

Section 2. Enactment of R.S. 40:1231.____

R.S. 40:1231.____ is hereby enacted to read as follows:

§1231.____. Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics; first responder status

A. For purposes of the laws of this state, any Emergency Medical Technician or Paramedic who is licensed or certified by the Louisiana Bureau of Emergency Medical Services and who is employed by or volunteers for a public, private, nonprofit, or governmental emergency medical service shall be recognized as a first responder.

B. Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics shall be included within the definition of "first responder" wherever such term is used in the Revised Statutes, administrative rules, executive orders, policies, or state-funded programs, unless expressly excluded by law.

C. Nothing in this Section shall be construed to modify scope of practice, licensing requirements, or regulatory authority of the Louisiana Department of Health.

Section 3. Conforming Interpretation

All provisions of law, rules, and policies of this state referencing first responders shall be interpreted to include Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics, including emergency preparedness, disaster response, critical incident stress management, and occupational safety programs.

Section 4. Effective Date

This Act shall become effective upon signature by the governor or, if not signed, upon expiration of the time for gubernatorial action as provided by the Constitution of Louisiana.