
DIGEST

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HB 329 Original

2026 Regular Session

Dickerson

Abstract: Expands the definition of "first responder" to include members of the United Cajun Navy and defines "the United Cajun Navy".

Present law with regard to the La. 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 present law (R.S. 29:721 et seq.), and first responders as defined in present law (R.S. 29:723), including medical personnel, emergency and medical technicians, volunteer firemen, auxiliary law enforcement officers, state agency essential workers, emergency service dispatchers, 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 retains present law and includes the United Cajun Navy in the definition of "first responder".

Proposed law defines "the United Cajun Navy" as the nonprofit organization registered with the secretary of state by charter number 43009455N.

Proposed law provides that members of the United Cajun Navy shall be considered first responders only during weather emergencies as declared by the governor pursuant to present law (R.S. 29:721 et seq.). Further provides that nothing in proposed law shall relieve an employer of its responsibilities pursuant to present law (C.C. Art. 2320).

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

Proposed law includes the United Cajun Navy as other skilled support personnel for purposes of the Intrastate Mutual Aid Compact.

(Amends R.S. 23:1017.1(6) and R.S. 29:739(C); Adds R.S. 29:723(21))