

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2015

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SENATE BILL 238\*

Short Title: Stalking by GPS/Criminal Offense. (Public)

Sponsors: Senators Stein, Hartsell (Primary Sponsors); Bingham, Lowe, Sanderson, and Waddell.

Referred to: Rules and Operations of the Senate.

March 11, 2015

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
2 AN ACT TO PROVIDE THAT A PERSON COMMITS THE OFFENSE OF  
3 CYBERSTALKING IF THE PERSON KNOWINGLY INSTALLS OR PLACES A  
4 TRACKING DEVICE WITHOUT CONSENT AND USES THE DEVICE TO TRACK  
5 THE LOCATION OF AN INDIVIDUAL.

6 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

7 **SECTION 1.** G.S. 14-196.3 reads as rewritten:

8 "**§ 14-196.3. Cyberstalking.**

9 (a) The following definitions apply in this section:

10 (1) Electronic communication. – Any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images,  
11 sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature, transmitted in whole or in part by  
12 a wire, radio, computer, electromagnetic, photoelectric, or photo-optical  
13 system.

14 (2) Electronic mail. – The transmission of information or communication by the  
15 use of the Internet, a computer, a facsimile machine, a pager, a cellular  
16 telephone, a video recorder, or other electronic means sent to a person  
17 identified by a unique address or address number and received by that  
18 person.

19 (3) Electronic tracking device. – An electronic or mechanical device that  
20 permits a person to remotely determine or track the position and movement  
21 of another person.

22 (4) Fleet vehicle. – Any of the following: (i) one or more motor vehicles owned  
23 by a single entity and operated by employees or agents of the entity for  
24 business or government purposes, (ii) motor vehicles held for lease or rental  
25 to the general public, or (iii) motor vehicles held for sale by motor vehicle  
26 dealers.

27 (b) It is unlawful for a person to:

28 (1) Use in electronic mail or electronic communication any words or language  
29 threatening to inflict bodily harm to any person or to that person's child,  
30 sibling, spouse, or dependent, or physical injury to the property of any  
31 person, or for the purpose of extorting money or other things of value from  
32 any person.

33 (2) Electronically mail or electronically communicate to another repeatedly,  
34 whether or not conversation ensues, for the purpose of abusing, annoying,  
35 threatening, terrifying, harassing, or embarrassing any person.



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- 1 (3) Electronically mail or electronically communicate to another and to  
2 knowingly make any false statement concerning death, injury, illness,  
3 disfigurement, indecent conduct, or criminal conduct of the person  
4 electronically mailed or of any member of the person's family or household  
5 with the intent to abuse, annoy, threaten, terrify, harass, or embarrass.
- 6 (4) Knowingly permit an electronic communication device under the person's  
7 control to be used for any purpose prohibited by this section.
- 8 (5) Knowingly install or place an electronic tracking device without consent, or  
9 to cause an electronic tracking device to be installed without consent, and  
10 use the device to track the location of any person. The provisions of this  
11 subdivision do not apply to the installation, placement, or use of an  
12 electronic tracking device by any of the following:
- 13 a. A law-enforcement officer, judicial officer, probation or parole  
14 officer, or employee of the Division of Corrections, Department of  
15 Public Safety, when any such person is engaged in the lawful  
16 performance of official duties and in accordance with State or federal  
17 law.
- 18 b. The parent or legal guardian of a minor when tracking (i) the minor  
19 or (ii) any person authorized by the parent or legal guardian as a  
20 caretaker of the minor at any time when the minor is under the  
21 person's sole care provided that the tracking device is not located on  
22 the physical person of the caretaker.
- 23 c. A legally authorized representative of a disabled adult, as defined in  
24 G.S. 108A-101(d).
- 25 d. The owner of fleet vehicles, when tracking such vehicles.
- 26 e. A private investigator as defined in G.S. 74C-3(a)(8), who is licensed  
27 in accordance with G.S. 74C-2 and is acting in the normal course of  
28 his or her business and with the consent of the owner of the property  
29 upon which the electronic tracking device is installed and placed.  
30 However, this exception does not apply if the private investigator is  
31 working on behalf of a client who is subject to a domestic violence  
32 protective order under Chapter 50B of the General Statutes, or if the  
33 private investigator knows or should reasonably know that the client  
34 seeks the private investigator's services to aid in the commission of a  
35 crime. For purposes of this sub-subdivision, the term "private  
36 investigator" includes "private detective" as defined in  
37 G.S. 74C-3(a)(8).
- 38 f. The installation, placement, or use of an electronic tracking device  
39 authorized by an order of a State or federal court.
- 40 (c) Any offense under this section committed by the use of electronic mail or electronic  
41 communication may be deemed to have been committed where the electronic mail or electronic  
42 communication was originally sent, originally received in this State, or first viewed by any  
43 person in this State.
- 44 (d) Any person violating the provisions of this section shall be guilty of a Class 2  
45 misdemeanor.
- 46 (e) This section does not apply to any peaceable, nonviolent, or nonthreatening activity  
47 intended to express political views or to provide lawful information to others. This section shall  
48 not be construed to impair any constitutionally protected activity, including speech, protest, or  
49 assembly."

50 **SECTION 2.** This act becomes effective December 1, 2015, and applies to  
51 offenses committed on or after that date.