

STATE OF NEW YORK

9261

IN SENATE

February 19, 2026

Introduced by Sen. SCARCELLA-SPANTON -- read twice and ordered printed,
and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Veterans, Home-
land Security and Military Affairs

AN ACT to amend the executive law, in relation to deeming certain utili-
ty workers first responders during a declared state disaster emergency

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assem-
bly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. Section 29-b of the executive law is amended by adding a
2 new subdivision 4 to read as follows:

3 4. a. For purposes of any state disaster emergency declared pursuant
4 to section twenty-eight of this article, employees of public utilities,
5 municipal utilities, electric corporations, gas corporations, water
6 corporations, steam corporations, telecommunications corporations, and
7 cable television companies, as such terms are defined in the public
8 service law, whose duties include the construction, operation, mainte-
9 nance, repair, restoration, or protection of critical infrastructure,
10 shall be deemed first responders while engaged in emergency response,
11 service restoration, or infrastructure protection activities.

12 b. Such designation shall apply solely during the period of a declared
13 state disaster emergency and shall be limited to access, movement,
14 credentialing, emergency coordination, and emergency support services
15 necessary to protect public health and safety.

16 c. Nothing in this subdivision shall be construed to confer eligibil-
17 ity for retirement, disability, death benefits, or any other benefit not
18 otherwise provided by law.

19 § 2. This act shall take effect immediately.

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[-] is old law to be omitted.

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