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3 LIVINGSTON SUBSTITUTE FOR SB38
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8 SYNOPSIS: Under existing law, emergency responders may
9 receive emotional and moral peer support from
10 certified peer support members. The Alabama State
11 Law Enforcement Agency is the only agency that may
12 certify a peer support member.

13 This bill would also authorize the Alabama
14 Fire College to certify peer support members.
15

16 A BILL
17 TO BE ENTITLED
18 AN ACT
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20 Relating to emergency responders; to amend Section
21 36-21-14, Code of Alabama 1975, to authorize the Alabama Fire
22 College to provide certification to certain peer support
23 members.

24 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

25 Section 1. Section 36-21-14, Code of Alabama 1975,
26 is amended to read as follows:

27 "§36-21-14.

1 "(a) As used in this section, the following terms
2 shall have the following meanings:

3 "(1) CERTIFIED PEER SUPPORT MEMBER. ~~A law~~
4 ~~enforcement officer, firefighter, paramedic, emergency~~
5 ~~dispatcher, emergency medical technician of an emergency~~
6 ~~service agency or entity, An emergency responder or a person~~
7 who is assigned to be a chaplain by an emergency service
8 agency, ~~who has received training in critical incident stress~~
9 ~~management and who is certified as a peer support member by~~
10 the Alabama State Law Enforcement Agency or the Alabama Fire
11 College to provide emotional and moral support to an emergency
12 responder who needs emotional or moral support as a result of
13 job-related stress or an incident in which the emergency
14 responder was involved while acting in his or her official
15 capacity.

16 "(2) EMERGENCY RESPONDER. A law enforcement officer,
17 firefighter, wildland firefighter, paramedic, emergency
18 dispatcher, or emergency medical technician of an emergency
19 service agency or entity.

20 "(3) PEER SUPPORT EVENT. Any debriefing, defusing,
21 or coaching session conducted by a certified peer support
22 member that involves the emotional or moral support of an
23 emergency responder who needs emotional or moral support as a
24 result of job-related stress or an incident in which the
25 emergency responder was involved while acting in his or her
26 official capacity.

1 "(b) In order to become a certified peer support
2 member, all of the following must apply:

3 "(1) The person must be an emergency responder or a
4 chaplain of an emergency service agency.

5 "(2) The person must complete training in critical
6 stress management or peer support by a recognized training
7 agency. Recognized training agencies include, ~~but are not~~
8 ~~limited to,~~ the International Critical Incident Stress
9 Foundation, the National Organization for Victim Assistance,
10 the American Red Cross, and the Regional Counterdrug Training
11 Academy.

12 "(3) The person must be designated in writing by a
13 sheriff, police chief, fire chief, or other head of a law
14 enforcement agency, fire department, rescue agency, or a
15 public safety agency to provide peer support services to an
16 emergency responder or the spouse of an emergency responder.
17 Only one certified peer support person may be assigned per any
18 specific peer support event.

19 "(4) Law enforcement officers, emergency
20 dispatchers, or persons assigned to be a chaplain by an
21 emergency service agency, must be certified by the Alabama
22 State Law Enforcement Agency. Firefighters, wildland
23 firefighters, paramedics, and emergency medical technicians of
24 an emergency service agency or entity, or persons assigned to
25 be a chaplain by an emergency service agency, must be
26 certified by the Alabama Fire College.

1 "(c) Any communication made by an emergency
2 responder to a certified peer support member during a peer
3 support event is privileged. The emergency responder may waive
4 the privilege. The certified peer support member may not be
5 compelled to testify or otherwise disclose the contents of any
6 privileged communication under this section.

7 "(d) A communication made by an emergency responder
8 to a certified peer support member is not privileged if any of
9 the following apply:

10 "(1) The certified peer support member was an
11 initial emergency service responder, a witness, or a party to
12 the incident that prompted the communication to the certified
13 peer support member.

14 "(2) The communication reveals the intended
15 commission of a crime or otherwise harmful act, and the
16 disclosure of the communication is determined to be necessary
17 by the certified peer support member to protect any person
18 from a clear and imminent risk of mental or physical harm or
19 to forestall a serious threat to public safety.

20 "(3) The communication reveals that a crime was
21 committed.

22 "(4) A court determines the communications are not
23 privileged under the exceptions provided in Rule 503(d),
24 Alabama Rules of Evidence."

25 Section 2. This act shall become effective on the
26 first day of the third month following its passage and
27 approval by the Governor, or its otherwise becoming law.

