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HB 1703, Engrossed 1 2003

A bill to be entitled

An act relating to mitigating factors in certain offenses; amending s. 921.0026, F.S.; providing that the fact that a victim was an initiator, willing participant, aggressor, or provoker of an incident, or consented to an incident, is not a mitigating factor to offenses under ch. 794, F.S., or s. 800.04, F.S., under certain circumstances; providing an effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Section 921.0026, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

921.0026 Mitigating circumstances. -- This section applies to any felony offense, except any capital felony, committed on or after October 1, 1998.

- (1) A downward departure from the lowest permissible sentence, as calculated according to the total sentence points pursuant to s. 921.0024, is prohibited unless there are circumstances or factors that reasonably justify the downward departure. Mitigating factors to be considered include, but are not limited to, those listed in subsection (2). The imposition of a sentence below the lowest permissible sentence is subject to appellate review under chapter 924, but the extent of downward departure is not subject to appellate review.
- (2) Mitigating circumstances under which a departure from the lowest permissible sentence is reasonably justified include, but are not limited to:



HB 1703, Engrossed 1 2003

(a) The departure results from a legitimate, uncoerced plea bargain.

- (b) The defendant was an accomplice to the offense and was a relatively minor participant in the criminal conduct.
- (c) The capacity of the defendant to appreciate the criminal nature of the conduct or to conform that conduct to the requirements of law was substantially impaired.
- (d) The defendant requires specialized treatment for a mental disorder that is unrelated to substance abuse or addiction or for a physical disability, and the defendant is amenable to treatment.
- (e) The need for payment of restitution to the victim outweighs the need for a prison sentence.
- (f) The victim was an initiator, willing participant, aggressor, or provoker of the incident, except as provided in subsection (4).
- (g) The defendant acted under extreme duress or under the domination of another person.
- (h) Before the identity of the defendant was determined, the victim was substantially compensated.
- (i) The defendant cooperated with the state to resolve the current offense or any other offense.
- (j) The offense was committed in an unsophisticated manner and was an isolated incident for which the defendant has shown remorse.
- (k) At the time of the offense the defendant was too young to appreciate the consequences of the offense.
- (1) The defendant is to be sentenced as a youthful offender.



HB 1703, Engrossed 1 2003

(3) The defendant's substance abuse or addiction, including intoxication at the time of the offense, is not a mitigating factor under subsection (2) and does not, under any circumstances, justify a downward departure from the permissible sentencing range.

- (4) In cases in which the victim is under 16 years of age, the fact that the victim was an initiator, willing participant, aggressor, or provoker of the incident, or consented to the incident, is not a mitigating factor to any offense contained in chapter 794 or s. 800.04 in which consent is not a defense if the offender was more than 4 years older than the victim at the time of the offense. Such fact, under the circumstances provided in this subsection, shall not justify a downward departure from the permissible sentencing range.
 - Section 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law.