

By the Committee on Comprehensive Planning; and Senators Miller, Aronberg, Crist, Dawson, Siplin, Bennett, Campbell, Margolis, Saunders, Bullard, Lawson and Wilson

316-2174-04

1 A bill to be entitled
 2 An act relating to neighborhood crime watch
 3 programs; authorizing a county sheriff or
 4 municipal police department to establish
 5 neighborhood crime watch programs; providing
 6 for residents and business owners located
 7 within the county or municipality to
 8 participate in the program; prohibiting the
 9 harassment of a participant of a neighborhood
 10 crime watch program under certain
 11 circumstances; providing penalties; defining
 12 the term "harass"; providing an effective date.

13
 14 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

15
 16 Section 1. Establishment of neighborhood crime watch
 17 programs.--A county sheriff or municipal police department may
 18 establish neighborhood crime watch programs within the county
 19 or municipality. The participants of a neighborhood crime
 20 watch program shall include, but need not be limited to,
 21 residents of the county or municipality and owners of
 22 businesses located within the county or municipality.

23 Section 2. Harassment of participant of neighborhood
 24 crime watch program prohibited; penalty; definition.--

25 (1) It is a misdemeanor of the first degree,
 26 punishable as provided in section 775.082 or section 775.083,
 27 Florida Statutes, for a person to willfully harass a person
 28 who is a member of a neighborhood crime watch program for the
 29 purpose of intimidating or retaliating against that person for
 30 his or her participation in a neighborhood crime watch
 31 program. It is a misdemeanor of the first degree, punishable

1 as provided in section 775.082 or section 775.083, Florida
2 Statutes, for a person to harass a member of a neighborhood
3 crime watch program while such member is traveling to or from
4 a neighborhood crime watch meeting, actively participating in
5 a neighborhood crime watch meeting or activity, or actively
6 participating in an ongoing criminal investigation, as
7 designated by a law enforcement officer.

8 (2) As used in this section, the term "harass" means
9 to engage in a course of conduct directed at a specific person
10 which causes substantial emotional distress in that person and
11 serves no legitimate purpose.

12 Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2004.

13
14 STATEMENT OF SUBSTANTIAL CHANGES CONTAINED IN
15 COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR
16 Senate Bill 1410

17 The committee substitute creates two separate first degree
18 misdemeanor offenses relating to the harassment of a member of
19 a neighborhood crime watch program.
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31