

HB 0511

2004

A bill to be entitled

An act relating to neighborhood crime watch programs; authorizing a county sheriff or municipal police department to establish neighborhood crime watch programs; providing for residents and business owners located within the county or municipality to participate in the program; prohibiting the harassment of a participant of a neighborhood crime watch program; providing a criminal penalty; defining the term "harass"; providing an effective date.

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

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

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

(1) It is a misdemeanor of the first degree for a person to willfully harass a person who is a member of a neighborhood crime watch group for the purpose of intimidating or retaliating against that person for his or her participation in a neighborhood crime watch program. It is a violation of this section for a person to harass a member of a neighborhood crime watch group while such member is traveling to or from a

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30 neighborhood crime watch meeting, actively participating in a
31 neighborhood crime watch meeting or activity, or actively
32 participating in an ongoing criminal investigation, as
33 designated by a law enforcement officer.

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

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