
Public Safety Committee

HB 1826

Brief Description: Creating the crime of interfering with a firefighter or emergency medical services provider.

Sponsors: Representatives Young and Graham.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Creates a gross misdemeanor that applies when a person, knowing that another person is a firefighter or emergency medical services provider, intentionally prevents or attempts to prevent that firefighter or emergency medical services provider from performing his or her official duties.

Hearing Date: 1/21/22

Staff: Omeara Harrington (786-7136).

Background:

Various crimes may apply when a person's conduct interrupts government operations or creates a danger or disturbance to the public. For example, a person is guilty of Obstructing a Law Enforcement Officer, a gross misdemeanor, if the person willfully hinders, delays, or obstructs any law enforcement officer in the discharge of his or her official powers or duties. Among other means, a person commits Malicious Mischief in the first or second degree, a class B or C felony, respectively, if he or she causes or risks an interruption or impairment of service to the public by damaging or tampering with an emergency vehicle. It is also misdemeanor to refuse to comply with any lawful order or direction of a flagger, police officer, or firefighter who is regulating traffic.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Additionally, there are laws requiring drivers to yield to emergency vehicles, and prohibiting following within 500 feet of a firetruck or driving over an unprotected firehose.

Summary of Bill:

The gross misdemeanor crime of Interfering with a Firefighter or Emergency Medical Services Provider is created. A person commits the crime if he or she, with knowledge that another person is a firefighter or emergency medical services provider, intentionally prevents or attempts to prevent that firefighter or emergency medical services provider from performing his or her official duties.

Emergency medical services providers include emergency medical technicians and first responders, who are defined in statute as persons authorized by the Department of Health to render emergency medical care. A firefighter is any paid or volunteer firefighter or other employee of a fire department, county fire marshal's office, county fire prevention bureau, or fire protection district.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 12, 2022.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.