

1 State of Arkansas *As Engrossed: H3/8/21 H3/9/21 H3/15/21 H4/12/21 H4/19/21*
2 93rd General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2021

A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1508

4
5 By: Representatives Brown, Lowery, Christiansen, S. Berry, Bentley, Breaux, Cloud, Coleman, Crawford,
6 Evans, Hollowell, McClure, S. Meeks, Rye, Slape, B. Smith, S. Smith, Wooten, Bryant, Watson
7 By: Senator A. Clark

For An Act To Be Entitled

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10 AN ACT CONCERNING RIOT OFFENSES AND PUBLIC
11 DEMONSTRATION OFFENSES; CONCERNING OFFENSES COMMITTED
12 AGAINST FIRST RESPONDERS; CONCERNING PUBLIC AND
13 PRIVATE PROPERTY OFFENSES; CONCERNING PROCEDURES UPON
14 ARREST FOR RIOT OFFENSES OR THE OBSTRUCTION OF A
15 HIGHWAY OR OTHER PUBLIC PASSAGE; AND FOR OTHER
16 PURPOSES.

Subtitle

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20 CONCERNING RIOT OFFENSES AND PUBLIC
21 DEMONSTRATION OFFENSES; CONCERNING
22 OFFENSES COMMITTED AGAINST FIRST
23 RESPONDERS; CONCERNING PUBLIC AND PRIVATE
24 PROPERTY OFFENSES; AND CONCERNING
25 PROCEDURES UPON ARREST.

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28 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

29
30 *SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 5, Chapter 13, Subchapter 1, is amended*
31 *to add an additional section to read as follows:*

32 *5-13-101. Definition.*

33 *As used in this chapter, "first responder" means a law enforcement*
34 *officer, firefighter, emergency medical provider, or emergency management*
35 *official, who is acting within the scope or course of his or her employment.*
36



1 SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 5-13-203 is amended to read as follows:
2 5-13-203. Battery in the third degree.

3 (a) A person commits battery in the third degree if:

4 (1) With the purpose of causing physical injury to another
5 person, the person causes physical injury to any person;

6 (2) The person recklessly causes physical injury to another
7 person;

8 (3) The person negligently causes physical injury to another
9 person by means of a deadly weapon; ~~or~~

10 (4) The person purposely causes stupor, unconsciousness, or
11 physical or mental impairment or injury to another person by administering to
12 the other person, without the other person's consent, any drug or other
13 substance; or

14 (5) The person knowingly causes physical contact with a first
15 responder by spitting, throwing, or otherwise transferring bodily fluids,
16 pathogens, or human waste onto the person of the first responder.

17 (b)(1) Battery in the third degree under subdivisions (a)(1)-(4) of
18 this section is a Class A misdemeanor.

19 (2) Battery in the third degree under subdivision (a)(5) of this
20 section is a Class A misdemeanor with a mandatory fine of two thousand five
21 hundred dollars (\$2,500) and a mandatory minimum sentence of at least thirty
22 (30) days of imprisonment for which the defendant is required to serve at
23 least thirty (30) days before being released from imprisonment.

24
25 SECTION 3. Arkansas Code Title 5, Chapter 13, Subchapter 2, is amended
26 to add an additional section to read as follows:

27 5-13-212. Aggravated assault against first responder.

28 (a) A person commits aggravated assault against a first responder if:

29 (1) The person knowingly causes physical contact with a first
30 responder by spitting, throwing, or otherwise transferring bodily fluids,
31 pathogens, or human waste onto the person of the first responder or by
32 throwing an object such as a brick, rock, bottle, projectile, firework,
33 chemical agent, or explosive device that a reasonable person knows or should
34 know could cause physical injury if the object struck the first responder;
35 and

36 (2) The physical contact:

1 (A) Results in serious physical injury to the first
2 responder;

3 (B) Involves the use of a deadly weapon;

4 (C) Involves the display of a firearm in such a manner
5 that the display of the firearm creates a substantial danger of death or
6 serious physical injury to another person; or

7 (D) Involves strangulation or attempted strangulation.

8 (b) Aggravated assault against a first responder is a Class C felony
9 with a mandatory fine of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) and a mandatory
10 minimum sentence of at least ninety (90) days' imprisonment for which the
11 defendant is required to serve at least ninety (90) days before being
12 released from imprisonment.

13
14 SECTION 4. Arkansas Code § 5-38-203 is amended to read as follows:

15 5-38-203. Criminal mischief in the first degree.

16 (a) A person commits the offense of criminal mischief in the first
17 degree if he or she purposely and without legal justification destroys or
18 causes damage to any:

19 (1) Property of another person; or

20 (2) Property, whether his or her own or the property of another
21 person, for the purpose of collecting any insurance for the property.

22 (b) Criminal mischief in the first degree is a:

23 (1) Class A misdemeanor if the amount of actual damage is one
24 thousand dollars (\$1,000) or less;

25 (2) Class D felony if the amount of actual damage is more than
26 one thousand dollars (\$1,000) but five thousand dollars (\$5,000) or less;

27 (3) Class C felony if the amount of actual damage is more than
28 five thousand dollars (\$5,000) but less than twenty-five thousand dollars
29 (\$25,000); or

30 (4) Class B felony if the amount of actual damage is twenty-five
31 thousand dollars (\$25,000) or more.

32 (c) In an action under this section involving cutting and removing
33 timber from the property of another person:

34 (1) The following create a presumption of a purpose to commit
35 the offense of criminal mischief in the first degree:

36 (A) The failure to obtain the survey as required by § 15-

1 32-101; or

2 (B) The purposeful misrepresentation of the ownership or
3 origin of the timber; and

4 (2)(A) There is imposed in addition to a penalty in subsection
5 (b) of this section a fine of not more than two (2) times the value of the
6 timber destroyed or damaged.

7 (B) However, in addition to subdivision (c)(2)(A) of this
8 section, the court may require the defendant to make restitution to the owner
9 of the timber.

10 (d) A person convicted of a felony offense under this section is
11 subject to an enhanced sentence of an additional term of imprisonment of five
12 (5) years at the discretion of the court if the finder of fact finds that the
13 damage to property involved the removal of nonferrous metal, as it is defined
14 in § 17-44-101.

15 (e) If the property destroyed or damaged under this section was a
16 residential mailbox or other container that the defendant knew or reasonably
17 should have known was used for the receipt or deposit of United States mail
18 or if the property was damaged by painting or other permanent application of
19 graffiti, the court shall include as part of the sentence:

20 (1) An order of restitution for property damage or loss incurred
21 as a result of the offense; and

22 (2) An additional punishment of at least twenty-five (25) hours
23 of community service.

24
25 SECTION 5. Arkansas Code § 5-38-204 is amended to read as follows:
26 5-38-204. Criminal mischief in the second degree.

27 (a) A person commits criminal mischief in the second degree if the
28 person:

29 (1) Recklessly destroys or damages any property of another
30 person; or

31 (2) Purposely tampers with any property of another person and by
32 the tampering causes substantial inconvenience to the owner or another
33 person.

34 (b) Criminal mischief in the second degree is a:

35 (1) Class A misdemeanor if the amount of actual damage is one
36 thousand dollars (\$1,000) or more but less than five thousand dollars

1 (\$5,000);

2 (2) Class D felony if the amount of actual damage is five
3 thousand dollars (\$5,000) or more; or

4 (3) Class B misdemeanor if otherwise committed.

5 (c) A person convicted of a felony offense under this section is
6 subject to an enhanced sentence of an additional term of imprisonment of five
7 (5) years at the discretion of the court if the finder of fact finds that the
8 damage to property involved the removal of nonferrous metal, as it is defined
9 in § 17-44-101.

10 (d) If the property destroyed or damaged under this section was a
11 residential mailbox or other container that the defendant knew or reasonably
12 should have known was used for the receipt or deposit of United States mail
13 or if the property was damaged by painting or other permanent application of
14 graffiti, the court shall include as part of the sentence:

15 (1) An order of restitution for property damage or loss incurred
16 as a result of the offense; and

17 (2) An additional punishment of at least twenty-five (25) hours
18 of community service.

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20 SECTION 6. Arkansas Code § 5-54-201(1)(F), concerning the definition
21 of "act of terrorism", is amended to read as follows:

22 (F) Any act that causes substantial damage to or
23 destruction of:

24 (i) Any hospital; or

25 (ii) Any building, ~~or~~ facility, or monument used,
26 owned, or maintained by:

27 (a) The United States Government;

28 (b) State government;

29 (c) Any unit of local government;

30 (d) A national defense contractor;

31 (e) A public utility; or

32 (f) A manufacturer of chemical or biological
33 products used in or in connection with agricultural production or the storage
34 or processing of agricultural products or the preparation of agricultural
35 products for food or food products intended for resale or for feed for
36 livestock; or

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SECTION 7. Arkansas Code § 5-71-201 is amended to read as follows:
5-71-201. Riot.

(a) A person commits the offense of riot if, with two (2) or more other persons, he or she knowingly engages in tumultuous or violent conduct that creates a substantial risk of:

- (1) Causing public alarm;
- (2) Disrupting the performance of a governmental function; or
- (3) Damaging or injuring property or a person.

(b)(1) Riot is a Class A misdemeanor.

(2) A person convicted of riot shall be sentenced to a minimum of thirty (30) days of imprisonment for which the defendant is required to serve at least thirty (30) days before being released from imprisonment and shall be ordered to pay restitution for any physical injury, damage, or loss incurred as a result of the offense.

SECTION 8. Arkansas Code § 5-71-202 is amended to read as follows:
5-71-202. Aggravated riot.

(a) A person commits the offense of aggravated riot if he or she commits the offense of riot when:

- (1) The person knowingly possesses a deadly weapon; or
- (2) The person knows that another person with whom he or she is acting possesses a deadly weapon.

(b)(1) Aggravated riot is a Class D felony.

(2) A person convicted of aggravated riot shall be sentenced to a minimum of forty-five (45) days' imprisonment and shall be ordered to pay restitution for any physical injury, damage, or loss incurred as a result of the offense.

SECTION 9. Arkansas Code § 5-71-203 is amended to read as follows:
5-71-203. Inciting riot.

(a) A person commits the offense of inciting riot if he or she knowingly:

- (1) By speech or conduct urges others to participate in a riot under circumstances that produce a clear and present danger that they will participate in a riot; or

1 (2) Gives commands, instructions, or signals to others in
2 furtherance of a riot.

3
4 (b)(1) Inciting riot is a Class D felony if physical injury to a
5 person or damage to property results from the offense.

6 (2)(A) Otherwise, inciting riot is a Class A misdemeanor.

7 (B) In addition to any other sentence imposed under this
8 section, a person convicted of inciting riot shall be ordered to pay
9 restitution for any physical injury, damage, or loss incurred as a result of
10 the offense.

11
12 SECTION 10. Arkansas Code § 5-71-214 is amended to read as follows:
13 5-71-214. Obstructing a highway or other public passage.

14 (a) A person commits the offense of obstructing a highway or other
15 public passage if, having no legal privilege to do so and acting alone or
16 with another person, he or she renders any highway or other public passage
17 impassable to pedestrian or vehicular traffic.

18 (b) It is a defense to a prosecution under this section that:

19 (1) The highway or other public passage was rendered impassable
20 solely because of a gathering of persons to hear the defendant speak or
21 otherwise communicate;

22 (2) The defendant was a member of a gathering contemplated by
23 subdivision (b)(1) of this section; or

24 (3) The highway or public passage obstructed has not been
25 established as a city street, county road, or state or federal highway under
26 the laws of this state and no civil court has established a right of passage
27 by prescription for the highway or public passage.

28 (c) Obstructing a highway or other public passage is a Class ~~G~~ A
29 misdemeanor.

30
31 SECTION 11. Arkansas Code Title 12, Chapter 12, Subchapter 1, is
32 amended to add an additional section to read as follows:

33 12-12-111. Investigation by Attorney General.

34 (a) The Attorney General may conduct an investigation when the
35 Attorney General receives information sufficient to constitute probable cause
36 to investigate one (1) or more of the following offenses:

- 1 (1) Riot, § 5-71-201;
- 2 (2) Aggravated riot, § 5-71-202;
- 3 (3) Inciting riot, § 5-71-203; or
- 4 (4) Obstructing a highway or other public passage, § 5-71-214.
- 5 (b) The Attorney General may refer findings of an investigation under
- 6 this section to the prosecuting attorney with jurisdiction for possible
- 7 criminal prosecution.

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/s/Brown

APPROVED: 4/29/21