

HCS HB 360 -- SECURITY THREATS

SPONSOR: Newman

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Crime Prevention and Public Safety by a vote of 8 to 1. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules- Legislative Oversight by a vote of 10 to 1.

This bill specifies that a person commits a class D felony of making a threat to the security of a public building or a public school in the first degree, when a person who is at least 18 communicates a knowingly false report that jeopardizes security procedures or knowingly causes a false belief or fear that causes the initiation of security procedures. Making a threat to the security of a public building or public school in the second degree, specified in the bill, is a class E felony, and making a threat to a public building or public school in the third degree, specified in the bill, is a class A misdemeanor.

This bill is similar to HB 1597 (2016).

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that schools have had to go on lock-down because of terror threats, and those threats require security resources that could be used elsewhere. Parents of students who attend schools that have experienced such lock-downs testified about how scary it is to receive notification that a terror threat has been made at their children's schools. A radio station made a false threat to test the security of a school. This should be a crime.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Newman; Sarah Booth Kiss; and Becky Morgan, Missouri Association of School Administrators.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.