

HB 2555 -- PROTEST REFORM

SPONSOR: Miller

This bill requires protesters to yield to motor vehicles on roadways and to pedestrians on walkways unless the protesters have received a permit from a political subdivision that closes a roadway for protest activities.

The bill labels any person who receives payment or a thing of value as compensation for attending a protest a "general lobbyist", and any person providing that compensation a "general lobbyist principal".

Both groups are required to file reports with the Missouri Ethics Commission. The contents of these reports are provided in the bill. Reports must be filed within seven days of compensated protest activity or within 48 hours of receipt of a contribution over \$5,000.

All reports related to a general lobbyist or general lobbyist principal will be considered public records. Penalties for failing to file a report and for knowingly concealing or misrepresenting a source of compensation are provided in the bill. Any person can file a complaint with the Missouri Ethics Commission alleging that a general lobbyist principal has violated these provisions. Any person who provides credible evidence leading to a confirmed violation of this section will be protected from retaliation. That person's identity will be confidential.

This bill provides that any person attempting to flee from an unlawful or riotous assemblage will not be criminally or civilly liable for any death or injury that may result to a participant in the assemblage if the person believes there is immediate danger and exercises due care at the time of the death or injury.

The bill establishes the offense of false imprisonment. A person commits the offense of false imprisonment if he or she knowingly restrains or impedes the movement of another without consent so as to interfere substantially with the person's liberty.

The offense of false imprisonment is a class A misdemeanor, unless the person unlawfully restrained is removed from this state, in which case it is a class E felony.

A person who commits the offense of false imprisonment will also be guilty of the offense of assault in the third degree if physical contact was initiated by the person during the commission of the offense of false imprisonment. If a person moves to block an individual, it will be assumed that any subsequent physical contact was initiated by the offender.

An individual will be deemed to have met the burden of proof in a false imprisonment case and assumed that the individual feared for his or her life if the individual attempts to retreat from a person behaving in an aggressive or threatening manner, as provided in the bill.

A person also violates this provision if the person commits an offense upon a motor vehicle that is occupied so long as the action against the motor vehicle constitutes a felony. It will be assumed that the occupants of the motor vehicle fear for their lives.

A person also violates this provision if the person commits an offense upon a building that is occupied so long as the action against the building constitutes a felony. It will be assumed that the occupants of the building fear for their lives.

The bill also makes the act of wearing a mask or face covering during an unlawful assembly a class A misdemeanor for the first offense, and a class E felony for a second or subsequent offense.