

COMMITTEE BILL ANALYSIS

Bill: Senate Bill 671

Printer's No.: 666

Sponsor: Senator Hughes

Prepared by: Gregg Warner

Synopsis: This bill amends section 4905 of the Crimes Code, Title 18 of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, to further provide for making false alarms to agencies of public safety.

Summary: A person commits an offense under section 4905 if the person knowingly and intentionally makes or causes to be made a false alarm of a crime or a medical or other emergency to any of the following: police officer, State or local law enforcement agency, firefighter, fire company, emergency medical services agency, emergency medical services provider, 911 system operator or a governmental employee or contractor or an employee of a contractor who is authorized to receive a report of a crime or medical or other emergency.

Grading

Generally this offense is a misdemeanor of the first degree. If the false report is made or caused to be made during a declared state of emergency the offense is a third degree felony. If bodily injury results the offense is a third degree felony. The offense is a felony of the second if serious bodily injury occurs and a felony of the first degree if an individual is killed.

Costs

The court may order a person convicted or adjudicated to pay the State or local unity of government the costs of responding to the false report. The court may order the parents of a juvenile to pay a portion of the costs ordered but this does not relieve the juvenile from of his obligation to pay costs as ordered. The court shall take into account the financial resources of the parents and may order payments in installments.

Jurisdiction

A violation of section 4905 may be prosecuted in a jurisdiction in which the communication originated or terminated.

Effective date

This act takes effect in 60 days.

Background: Currently, 18 Pa.C.S. §4905, relating to false alarms to agencies of public safety, is graded as a misdemeanor of the first degree unless the false report is made during a declared state of emergency and then the offense is graded as a felony of the third degree. Current law does not provide for costs.