

FIRST REGULAR SESSION

HOUSE BILL NO. 274

96TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVES BAHR (Sponsor) AND KELLEY (126) (Co-sponsor).

1017L.011

D. ADAM CRUMBLISS, Chief Clerk

AN ACT

To repeal sections 578.501, 578.502, and 578.503, RSMo, and to enact in lieu thereof one new section relating to funeral protests, with an existing penalty provision.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the state of Missouri, as follows:

Section A. Sections 578.501, 578.502, and 578.503, RSMo, are repealed and one new section enacted in lieu thereof, to be known as section 578.502, to read as follows:

578.502. 1. This section shall be known as "Spc. Edward Lee Myers' Law".

2. **In order to protect the privacy of grieving families so that they may mourn the death of relatives in peace and dignity**, it shall be unlawful for any person to engage in picketing or other protest activities within three hundred feet of or about any location at which a funeral is held, within one hour prior to the commencement of any funeral, and until one hour following the cessation of any funeral. Each day on which a violation occurs shall constitute a separate offense. Violation of this section is a class B misdemeanor, unless committed by a person who has previously pled guilty to or been found guilty of a violation of this section, in which case the violation is a class A misdemeanor.

3. For purposes of this section[,] **the following terms shall mean:**

(1) "Funeral" [means], the ceremonies[, processions,] and memorial services held in connection with the burial or cremation of the dead;

(2) "**Other protest activities**", any action that is disruptive or undertaken to disrupt or disturb a funeral.

[578.501. 1. This section shall be known as "Spc. Edward Lee Myers' Law".

EXPLANATION — Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted from the law. Matter in **bold-face** type in the above bill is proposed language.

3 2. It shall be unlawful for any person to engage in picketing or other
4 protest activities in front of or about any location at which a funeral is held,
5 within one hour prior to the commencement of any funeral, and until one hour
6 following the cessation of any funeral. Each day on which a violation occurs
7 shall constitute a separate offense. Violation of this section is a class B
8 misdemeanor, unless committed by a person who has previously pled guilty to
9 or been found guilty of a violation of this section, in which case the violation is
10 a class A misdemeanor.

11 3. For the purposes of this section, "funeral" means the ceremonies,
12 processions and memorial services held in connection with the burial or
13 cremation of the dead.]
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2 [578.503. The enactment of section 578.502 shall become effective only
3 on the date the provisions of section 578.501 are finally declared void or
4 unconstitutional by a court of competent jurisdiction and upon notification by the
attorney general to the revisor of statutes.]