

HCS HBs 2061 & 2219 -- FALSE EMERGENCY RESPONSES

SPONSOR: Kidd

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Crime Prevention and Public Safety by a vote of 6 to 0. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules- Legislative Oversight by a vote of 10 to 0.

This bill expands the offense of making a false report to include, with the intent to cause an emergency response in the absence of circumstances requiring such a response, a person knowingly communicating false or misleading information indicating that conduct that may reasonably be believed to constitute a violation of any state or federal criminal law or be believed to endanger public health or safety has taken, is taking, or will take place. The bill also specifies the different levels of penalties for making this type of false report.

The bill also specifies that a person incurring bodily injury or damage or loss to property as a result of a false report, regardless of any criminal prosecution or result thereof, shall have a civil action to secure an injunction, damages, or other appropriate relief in law or equity against any and all persons who violated the section. These provisions do not apply to alleged victims or other witnesses present at the location to which the emergency response was dispatched who communicated information about a complaint of domestic violence.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that SWATting is an issue in this state, and this gives prosecutors another charge to add to any other charge available if someone gets injured or killed as a result of this offense.

Testifying for the bill was Representative Kidd.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.