

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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131st MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2023

Legislative Document

No. 405

S.P. 186

In Senate, February 2, 2023

An Act to Prevent False Reporting Leading to Evacuation, Shutdown or Lockdown

Reference to the Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D M Grant".

DAREK M. GRANT
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator CARNEY of Cumberland.
Cosponsored by Representative DOUDERA of Camden and
Senators: HARRINGTON of York, President JACKSON of Aroostook, LAWRENCE of York,
LYFORD of Penobscot, RAFFERTY of York, Representatives: MATHIESON of Kittery,
POIRIER of Skowhegan, ZAGER of Portland.

1 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

2 **Sec. 1. 17-A MRSA §509**, as amended by PL 1977, c. 510, §56, is further amended
3 to read:

4 **§509. False public alarm or report**

5 1. A person is guilty of false public alarm or report if:

6 A. ~~He~~ The person knowingly gives or causes to be given false information to any law
7 enforcement officer or the enhanced 9-1-1 services established in Title 25, chapter 352
8 with the intent of inducing such officer or any other emergency services personnel to
9 believe that a crime has been committed or that another has committed a crime,
10 knowing the information to be false; ~~or~~

11 B. ~~He~~ The person knowingly gives or causes to be given false information to any law
12 enforcement officer, a member of a fire-fighting firefighting agency, including a
13 volunteer fire department, the enhanced 9-1-1 services established in Title 25, chapter
14 352 or any other person knowing that such other is likely to communicate the
15 information to a law enforcement officer ~~or~~, a member of a fire-fighting firefighting
16 agency; or any other emergency services personnel concerning a fire, explosive or other
17 similar substance ~~which that~~ is capable of endangering the safety of persons, knowing
18 that such information is false, or knowing that ~~he~~ the person has no information relating
19 to the fire, explosive or other similar substance; ~~or~~

20 C. ~~He~~ The person knowingly gives or causes to be given false information concerning
21 an emergency to any ambulance service, the enhanced 9-1-1 services established in
22 Title 25, chapter 352, any other emergency services personnel or ~~to~~ any government
23 agency or public utility that deals with emergencies involving danger to life or
24 property, with the intent of inducing such service, personnel, agency or utility to
25 respond to the reported emergency, knowing such information to be false.

26 A violation of this subsection is a Class D crime.

27 ~~2. False public alarm is a Class D crime.~~

28 3. A person is guilty of aggravated false public alarm or report if the person violates
29 subsection 1 and the violation causes the evacuation, shutdown or lockdown of a building,
30 school, public square or park, place of assembly or public transportation facility or
31 generates an emergency response from a law enforcement officer or agency, a firefighter
32 or firefighting agency or any other emergency services personnel.

33 A violation of this subsection is a Class C crime.

34 **Sec. 2. 17-A MRSA §1501, sub-§8, ¶C**, as enacted by PL 2021, c. 170, §1, is
35 amended to read:

36 C. The discriminatory motive of the person in making a false public alarm or report in
37 violation of section 509, ~~subsection 4~~; and

38 **SUMMARY**

39 This bill amends the crime of false public alarm or report by including making a false
40 public alarm or report to the enhanced 9-1-1 services and by making the offense a Class C
41 crime if the violation causes the evacuation, shutdown or lockdown of a building, school,

1 public square or park, place of assembly or public transportation facility or generates an
2 emergency response from a law enforcement officer or agency, a firefighter or firefighting
3 agency or any other emergency services personnel.