

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 718
By: Fletcher
Criminal Jurisprudence
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Current statute makes it an offense to engage in picketing at a funeral service beginning one hour before the service begins and ending one hour after the service is completed. Often, services do not commence on time, especially when a soldier is laid to rest. Families have a substantial interest in attending funeral services for their loved ones, and that interest is violated when funerals are targeted for disruption, picketing, and other demonstrations. H.B. 718 seeks to further address disruptions before and after funeral services by extending the period during which a person engaged in picketing at a funeral service commits an offense.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

H.B. 718 amends the Penal Code to extend the period during which a person engaged in picketing within 1,000 feet of a facility or cemetery being used for a funeral service commits the offense of funeral service disruption from one hour before the service begins until one hour after the service is completed to three hours before the service begins until three hours after the service is completed.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2011.