88R535 EAS-D

By:  Allison H.B. No. 650

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to increasing the criminal penalty for the offense of criminal mischief involving the damage or destruction of a public monument or a place of worship.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1.  Section 28.03, Penal Code, is amended by amending Subsections (b) and (f) and adding Subsection (l) to read as follows:

(b)  Except as provided by Subsections (f) and (h), an offense under this section is:

(1)  a Class C misdemeanor if:

(A)  the amount of pecuniary loss is less than $100; or

(B)  except as provided in Subdivision (3)(A) or (3)(B), it causes substantial inconvenience to others;

(2)  a Class B misdemeanor if the amount of pecuniary loss is $100 or more but less than $750;

(3)  a Class A misdemeanor if:

(A)  the amount of pecuniary loss is $750 or more but less than $2,500; or

(B)  the actor causes in whole or in part impairment or interruption of any public water supply, or causes to be diverted in whole, in part, or in any manner, including installation or removal of any device for any such purpose, any public water supply, regardless of the amount of the pecuniary loss;

(4)  a state jail felony if the amount of pecuniary loss is:

(A)  $2,500 or more but less than $30,000;

(B)  less than $2,500, if the property damaged or destroyed is a habitation and if the damage or destruction is caused by a firearm or explosive weapon;

(C)  less than $2,500, if the property was a fence used for the production or containment of:

(i)  cattle, bison, horses, sheep, swine, goats, exotic livestock, or exotic poultry; or

(ii)  game animals as that term is defined by Section 63.001, Parks and Wildlife Code; or

(D)  less than $30,000 and the actor:

(i)  causes wholly or partly impairment or interruption of property used for flood control purposes or a dam or of public communications, public transportation, public gas or power supply, or other public service; or

(ii)  causes to be diverted wholly, partly, or in any manner, including installation or removal of any device for any such purpose, any public communications or public gas or power supply;

(5)  a felony of the third degree if:

(A)  the amount of the pecuniary loss is $30,000 or more but less than $150,000;

(B)  the actor, by discharging a firearm or other weapon or by any other means, causes the death of one or more head of cattle or bison or one or more horses; or

(C)  regardless of the amount of pecuniary loss:

(i)  the property damaged or destroyed is a public monument or a place of worship; or

(ii) [~~(C)~~]  the actor causes wholly or partly impairment or interruption of access to an automated teller machine[~~, regardless of the amount of the pecuniary loss~~];

(6)  a felony of the second degree if the amount of pecuniary loss is $150,000 or more but less than $300,000; or

(7)  a felony of the first degree if the amount of pecuniary loss is $300,000 or more.

(f)  An offense under this section is a state jail felony if the damage or destruction is inflicted on a place of [~~worship or~~] human burial[~~, a public monument,~~] or on a community center that provides medical, social, or educational programs and if the amount of the pecuniary loss to real property or to tangible personal property is $750 or more but less than $30,000.

(l)  If conduct that constitutes an offense under this section also constitutes an offense under any other law, the actor may be prosecuted under this section, the other law, or both.

SECTION 2.  Section 28.03(g), Penal Code, is amended by adding Subdivision (10) to read as follows:

(10)  "Public monument" means a statue, structure, building, or site that is in a public place and that is of historical importance or interest, including a statue, structure, building, or site that is designed to recognize or commemorate a notable person or event.

SECTION 3.  The change in law made by this Act applies only to an offense committed on or after the effective date of this Act. An offense committed before the effective date of this Act is governed by the law in effect on the date the offense was committed, and the former law is continued in effect for that purpose. For purposes of this section, an offense was committed before the effective date of this Act if any element of the offense occurred before that date.

SECTION 4.  This Act takes effect September 1, 2023.