**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND ARTICLE 5, CHAPTER 23, TITLE 16 OF THE 1976 CODE, RELATING TO MISCELLANEOUS OFFENSES INVOLVING WEAPONS, BY ADDING SECTION 16-23-540, TO PROVIDE THAT IT IS UNLAWFUL FOR A PERSON TO THREATEN, SOLICIT ANOTHER TO THREATEN, OR CONSPIRE TO THREATEN TO CAUSE DAMAGE, SERIOUS BODILY INJURY, OR DEATH OR TO CAUSE DAMAGE TO OR DESTROY A BUILDING OR OTHER REAL OR PERSONAL PROPERTY BY USE OF A DANGEROUS WEAPON ON ANY PREMISES OR PROPERTY OWNED, OPERATED, OR CONTROLLED BY A PRIVATE OR PUBLIC SCHOOL, COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY, TECHNICAL COLLEGE, OR OTHER POST‑SECONDARY INSTITUTION, IN A CHURCH, IN ANY PUBLICLY OWNED BUILDING OR RECREATIONAL PARK AREAS, OR IN A PUBLIC GATHERING PLACE; TO PROVIDE THAT A PERSON WHO IS CHARGED WITH A VIOLATION MUST UNDERGO A MENTAL HEALTH EVALUATION AND, IF NECESSARY, MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT OR COUNSELING; AND TO PROVIDE FOR PENALTIES.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina:

SECTION 1. Article 5, Chapter 23, Title 16 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Section 16‑23‑540. (A) It is unlawful for a person to threaten, solicit another to threaten, or conspire to threaten to cause damage, serious bodily injury, or death to another person or to cause damage to or destroy a building or other real or personal property by use of a dangerous weapon:

(1) on any premises or property owned, operated, or controlled by a private or public school, college, university, technical college, or other post‑secondary institution;

(2) in a church, as defined by Section 61-6-120(A)(1);

(3) in any publicly owned building or recreational park areas; or

(4) public gathering place.

(B)(1) A person who is charged with violating subsection (A) shall, as a condition of his bond, undergo a mental health evaluation. If the mental health evaluation reveals that the person needs mental health treatment or counseling, then the solicitor may refer him to a mental health court or the court shall require him to undergo mental health treatment or counseling by a court-approved mental health professional, mental health facility, or facility operated by the State Department of Mental Health.

(2) Mental health treatment or counseling pursuant to item (1) is all that may be imposed upon a person referred by the solicitor to a mental health court or required by the court to undergo mental health treatment or counseling.

(C) A person who violates subsection (A) and who undergoes a mental health evaluation and it is determined that the person does not need mental health treatment or counseling:

(1) is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, must be fined not more than two thousand dollars, imprisoned not more than two years, or both;

(2) if the violation results in damage to or destruction of a building or other real or personal property, is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, must be fined not more than three thousand dollars, imprisoned not more than three years, or both; or

(3) if the violation results in the serious bodily injury or death of another person, is guilty of a felony and, upon conviction, must be fined not more than five thousand dollars, imprisoned not more than five years, or both.

(D) Nothing contained in this section may be construed to repeal, replace, or preclude application of any other criminal statute.”

SECTION 2. This act takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

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