

Florida Governor Ron DeSantis Announces Legislation to Stop Soros-Funded Rioters

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Florida: The “Combating Violence, Disorder and Looting and Law Enforcement Protection Act,” would create new criminal offenses and increase penalties for those who target law enforcement and participate in violent or disorderly assemblies. Governor DeSantis said that our right to peacefully assemble is being taken advantage of by “professional agitators.” The new criminal charges make it a felony when a mob causes injury to other people or damage to property, obstructs traffic, and destroys public property. RICO charges may be applied to anyone who organizes or funds a violent or disorderly assembly. Stiffer penalties are extended for people who injure police officers. The State of Florida will cut aid to any local government that slashes their police budget, and the state will allow local governments to be sued if grossly negligent. [There are adequate laws covering most of these crimes that already exist, but the problem is the failure to enforce the law.]

Today, Governor Ron DeSantis announced new **legislation** to stop violent assemblies and protect law enforcement. The proposed legislation, the “Combating Violence, Disorder and Looting and Law Enforcement Protection Act,” creates new criminal offenses and increases penalties for those who target law enforcement and participate in violent or disorderly assemblies.

“Our right to peacefully assemble is one of our most cherished as Americans, but throughout the country we’ve seen that right being taken advantage of by professional agitators, bent on sowing disorder and causing mayhem in our cities,” said Governor DeSantis. “I will not allow this kind of violence to occur here in Florida. The legislation announced today will not only combat rioting and looting, but also protect the men and women in law enforcement that wake up every day to keep us safe. I look forward to working with the Florida Legislature next session to sign this proposal into

law.”

“Peaceful protesting is a constitutional right, but looting and disorderly rioting are not,” said Senate President-Designate Wilton Simpson. “We will continue to stand with our brave law enforcement officers as they protect and serve. This bill is a way to ensure that all Floridians can live in a safe and secure environment. I commend Governor DeSantis for his commitment to public safety.”

“Violence and destruction are the tools of terrorists, not reformers,” said House Speaker-Designate Chris Sprowls. “We live in a country founded on the power of words, and no group of self-appointed activists and anarchists can be allowed to deprive others of their life, liberty or property. I’m proud to stand with Governor DeSantis to say that in Florida we will respect the right of people to protest peacefully while defending the rule of law.”

The Combatting Violence, Disorder and Looting and Law Enforcement Protection Act has three components, outlined below:

New Criminal Offenses to Combat Rioting, Looting and Violence

1. Prohibition on Violent or Disorderly Assemblies: 3rd degree felony when 7 or more persons are involved in an assembly and cause damage to property or injury to other persons.
2. Prohibition on Obstructing Roadways: 3rd degree felony to obstruct traffic during an unpermitted protest, demonstration or violent or disorderly assembly; driver is *NOT* liable for injury or death caused if fleeing for safety from a mob.
3. Prohibition on Destroying or Toppling Monuments: 2nd degree felony to destroy public property during a violent or disorderly assembly.
4. Prohibition on Harassment in Public Accommodations: 1st degree misdemeanor for a participant in a violent or disorderly assembly to harass or intimidate a person at a public accommodation, such as a restaurant.
5. RICO Liability: RICO liability attaches to anyone who organizes or funds a violent or disorderly assembly.

Increased Penalties

1. Mandatory Minimum Jail Sentence: Striking a law enforcement officer (including with a projectile) during a violent or disorderly assembly = 6 months mandatory minimum jail sentence.
2. Offense Enhancements: Offense and/or sentence enhancements for: (1) throwing an object during a violent or disorderly assembly that strikes a civilian or law enforcement officer; (2) assault/battery of a law enforcement officer during a violent or disorderly assembly; and (3) participation in a violent or disorderly assembly by an individual from another state.

Citizen and Taxpayer Protection Measures

1. No “Defund the Police” Permitted: Prohibits state grants or aid to any local

government that slashes the budget for law enforcement services.

2. Victim Compensation: Waives sovereign immunity to allow a victim of a crime related to a violent or disorderly assembly to sue local government for damages where the local government is grossly negligent in protecting persons and property.
3. Government Employment/Benefits: Terminates state benefits and makes anyone ineligible for employment by state/local government if convicted of participating in a violent or disorderly assembly.
4. Bail: No bond or bail until first appearance in court if charged with a crime related to participating in a violent or disorderly assembly; rebuttable presumption against bond or bail after first appearance.

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