

Committee on Criminal Justice

CS/HB 1047 — Offenses Against Certain Animals

by Judiciary Committee and Reps. Killebrew, Smith, and others (SB 1300 by Senators Burton and Book)

The bill amends s. 843.01, F.S., by creating a new subsection (2) which prohibits a person from knowingly and willfully resisting, obstructing, or opposing a police canine or police horse as defined in s. 843.19(1)(a), F.S., working at the direction of or in tandem with any officer or legally authorized person listed in s. 843.01(1), F.S., by offering or doing violence to the police canine or police horse.

The above offense is a third degree felony and is ranked as a Level 2 in the Offense Severity Ranking Chart (OSRC). Additionally, the bill amends the OSRC to reflect that only s. 843.01(1), F.S., is a Level 5 offense.

The bill amends s. 843.19(3), F.S., to increase the penalty for any person who actually and intentionally maliciously touches, strikes, or causes bodily harm to a police canine, fire canine, SAR canine, or police horse from a first degree misdemeanor to a third degree felony. The OSRC is amended to rank the offense at a Level 2.

The bill amends s. 843.19(4), F.S., to increase the penalty for a person who intentionally or knowingly maliciously harasses, teases, interferes with, or attempts to interfere with a police canine, fire canine, SAR canine, or police horse while the animal is in the performance of its duties from a second degree misdemeanor to a first degree misdemeanor.

The bill amends the OSRC to increase the ranking for a violation of s. 843.19(2), F.S., which prohibits injuring, disabling, or killing a police canine, fire canine, SAR canine, or police horse. The offense ranking is increased from a Level 3 to a Level 4.

The bill removes the general reference to s. 843.19, F.S., in Level 3 of the OSRC.

If approved by the Governor, or allowed to become law without the Governor's signature, these provisions take effect October 1, 2023.

Vote: Senate 39-0; House 116-0