

The Florida Senate
BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Rules

BILL: CS/CS/SRs 214 & 222

INTRODUCER: Judiciary Committee; Infrastructure and Security Committee; and Senators Rodriguez, Simpson, and others

SUBJECT: Philosophies that Espouse Superiority

DATE: February 28, 2020

REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	<u>Proctor</u>	<u>Miller</u>	<u>IS</u>	<u>Fav/CS Combined</u>
2.	<u>Stallard</u>	<u>Cibula</u>	<u>JU</u>	<u>Fav/CS</u>
3.	<u>Proctor</u>	<u>Phelps</u>	<u>RC</u>	<u>Favorable</u>

Please see Section IX. for Additional Information:

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE - Substantial Changes

I. Summary:

CS/CS/SRs 214 & 222 rejects and condemns any philosophy that incites one group of people against another on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, or disability.

Accordingly, the resolution rejects and condemns the philosophies embrace by white nationalists and white supremacists. Finally, the resolution affirms that these philosophies are contradictory to the values that define the people of Florida and the United States.

Legislative resolutions have no force of law and are not subject to the approval or veto powers of the Governor.

II. Present Situation:

Targeted Mass Violence

Florida has been the site of several mass shootings that include Pulse Nightclub in Orlando, Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport, Jacksonville Landing, as well as a SunTrust Bank in Sebring.¹ Many of these acts of

¹ Press Release, Executive Office of the Governor, *Governor Ron DeSantis Directs FDLE to Prioritize Threat Assessment Strategy* (Feb. 13, 2019), available at <https://www.flgov.com/2019/02/13/governor-ron-desantis-directs-fdle-to-prioritize-threat-assessment-strategy/> (last visited Jan. 22, 2020).

targeted mass violence appear to have been motivated by violent extremism based on a variety of supremacy philosophies.

White Nationalism

White nationalist groups espouse white supremacist or white separatist ideologies.² The term “white supremacist extremism” (WSE) describes people or groups who commit criminal acts in the name of white supremacist ideology. At its core, white supremacist ideology purports that the white race ranks above all others. WSE draws on the constitutionally protected activities of a broad swath of racist hate-oriented groups active in the United States ranging from the Ku Klux Klan to racist skinheads. Some of these groups have elaborate organizational structures, dues-paying memberships, and media wings. Additionally, many individuals espouse extremist beliefs without having formal membership in any specific organization.³

A large proportion of white supremacists dualistically divide the world between whites and all other peoples who are seen as enemies.⁴ Particular animus is directed toward Jews and African Americans.⁵

Scholars indicate that white supremacists believe in racial separation and that society discriminates against them. To them, whites have lost “ground to other groups and ... extreme measures are required to reverse the trend.”⁶ All of this has been encapsulated in a slogan known as the “Fourteen Words”: “We must secure the existence of our race and a future for white children.” This was coined by David Lane, a member of a violent terrorist group active in the 1980s. The Fourteen Words have been described as “the most popular white supremacist slogan in the world.”⁷

Incel

The term ‘incel’ was originally coined by an individual who started a website in the mid/late 1990s, entitled ‘Alana’s Involuntary Celibacy Project’ in order to discuss their sexual inactivity with others. The site was intended to foster an inclusive community to help people struggling to form relationships, but has since been co-opted by the current iteration of the incel movement.⁸

² Southern Poverty Law Center, *White Nationalist*, <https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/ideology/white-nationalist> (last visited Jan. 22, 2019).

³ Lisa N. Sacco and Jerome P. Bjelopera, Congressional Research Office, *Domestic Terrorism: An Overview*, Report R44921, Aug. 21, 2017, available at <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R44921>.

⁴ *Id.*, citing Chip Berlet and Stanislav Vysotsky, “Overview of U.S. White Supremacist Groups,” *Journal of Political and Military Sociology*, vol. 34, no. 1 (June 2006), p. 13.

⁵ *Id.*, citing Leonard Zeskind, *Blood and Politics: The History of the White Nationalist Movement from the Margins to the Mainstream* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2009), p. 40.

⁶ *Id.*, citing Rory McVeigh, “Structured Ignorance and Organized Racism in the United States,” *Social Forces*, vol. 82, no. 3 (March 2004), pp. 895-936.

⁷ *Id.*, citing Anti-Defamation League, *Guidebook*, p. 16. Lane died in 2007 while serving 190 years in prison for his involvement with a terrorist group named the Order. See “Founder of Terrorist Group Dies in Prison,” *Terre Haute Tribune-Star*, May 29, 2007, <http://tribstar.com/local/x1155692948/Founder-of-terrorist-group-dies-in-prison>. Among other writings, Lane also drafted an influential racist ideological tract titled “The 88 Precepts.”

⁸ Shannon Zimmerman, Luisa Ryan and David Duriesmith, *Recognizing the Violent Extremist Ideology of ‘Incels’* (September 2018), available at <https://www.wisglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Policybrief-Violent-Extremists-Incels.pdf>.

Although there is little in the way of authoritative published research in this area, the current incel movement appears to be a violent political ideology based upon misogyny, social marginalization, entitlement, male and white supremacy.⁹ Incel ideology is predicated on the notion that feminism has ruined society, therefore there is a need for a ‘gender revolt’ in order to reclaim a particular type of manhood.¹⁰ Incels believe their entitled access to women’s bodies is thwarted by women’s preference for more physically desirable men, and often frame this pattern of behavior as a form of theft. These individuals are frustrated at a world they see as denying them power and sexual control over women’s bodies. In their eyes, they are victims of oppressive feminism, an ideology which must be overthrown, even if by violence.¹¹

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

The resolution contains “Whereas” clauses stating that:

- Recent acts of domestic terror, including acts of mass violence, have shocked and saddened our nation;
- This murderous violence was perpetrated by individuals who embraced philosophies that espouse the superiority of one group of people over another on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, or religion;
- These philosophies are embraced by groups which include white nationalists, white supremacists, “incels,” and others; and
- These philosophies are contradictory to the values, constitutional protections, and moral fiber of the United States of America and the State of Florida.

The resolution rejects and condemns any philosophy that incites one group of people against another on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, or disability.

Accordingly, the resolution rejects and condemns the philosophies embrace by white nationalists and white supremacists and the resolution affirms that these philosophies are contradictory to the values that define the people of Florida and the United States.

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IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

⁹ *Id.*

¹⁰ Debbie Ging, *Alphas, betas, and incels: Theorizing the Masculinities of the Manosphere*, in *Men and Masculinities* (Dublin City University, Glasnevin, 2017).

¹¹ *Supra*, note 8.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

D. State Tax or Fee Increases:

None.

E. Other Constitutional Issues:

None identified.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

None.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Statutes Affected:

This Senate resolution does not amend the Florida Statutes. If approved, it will be recorded in the Journals of the Senate.

IX. Additional Information:

A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Substantial Changes:

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

CS/CS by Judiciary on February 19, 2020:

The committee substitute rejects philosophies that “incite” (rather than “espouse the superiority of”) one group of people against another on bases such as race, color, or religion. Moreover, the committee substitute expressly rejects the philosophies embraced by white supremacists and white nationalists.

CS by Infrastructure and Security on January 13, 2020:

- Combined SR 214 and SR 222, and expanded the resolution to reject and condemn any philosophy that espouses the superiority of one group of people over another on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, or religion; and
- Revised the whereas clauses to state:
 - Recent acts of domestic terror, including acts of mass violence, have shocked and saddened our nation;
 - This murderous violence was perpetrated by individuals who embraced philosophies that espouse the superiority of one group of people over another on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, or religion;
 - These philosophies are embraced by groups which include white nationalists, white supremacists, “incels”, and others; and
 - These philosophies are contradictory to the values, constitutional protections, and moral fiber of the United States of America and the State of Florida.

B. Amendments:

None.