

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

1st Session of the 60th Legislature (2025)

POLICY COMMITTEE  
RECOMMENDATION

FOR ENGROSSED

SENATE BILL NO. 743

By: Gollihare, Alvord,  
Thompson, Green, Paxton,  
Stanley, and Hall of the  
Senate

and

Lawson of the House

POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

An Act relating to criminal disturbance; declaring legislative findings; amending 21 O.S. 2021, Sections 915 and 916, which relate to disturbance of religious meeting; specifying range of punishment for certain misdemeanor offense; establishing felony offense for certain convictions; specifying range of punishment for certain felony offense; modifying elements of certain offenses; providing for noncodification; and declaring an emergency.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

SECTION 1. NEW LAW A new section of law not to be  
codified in the Oklahoma Statutes reads as follows:

The Legislature finds that the right of the people to meet and  
assemble for religious worship is imperative for the people of this  
state; that the exercise of the right of a person to protest at

1 places of religious worship must be balanced against the right of  
2 another person to meet and assemble for religious worship in an  
3 unobstructed manner; and that preventing the willful obstruction of  
4 access of a person to places of religious worship is a matter of  
5 statewide concern. Therefore, the Legislature declares that it is a  
6 compelling public interest of this state to protect the ability of  
7 its people to meet and assemble for religious worship without  
8 willful obstruction.

9 SECTION 2. AMENDATORY 21 O.S. 2021, Section 915, is  
10 amended to read as follows:

11 Section 915. Every person who willfully disturbs, interrupts,  
12 or disquiets any assemblage of people met for religious worship, by  
13 any of the acts ~~or things hereinafter~~ enumerated, is in Section 916  
14 of this title shall, upon conviction, be guilty of a misdemeanor  
15 punishable by a fine not to exceed Five Hundred Dollars (\$500.00),  
16 by imprisonment in the county jail for a term not to exceed one (1)  
17 year, or by both such fine and imprisonment. A person who commits a  
18 second or subsequent offense shall, upon conviction, be guilty of a  
19 felony punishable by a fine not to exceed One Thousand Dollars  
20 (\$1,000.00), by imprisonment in the custody of the Department of  
21 Corrections for a term not to exceed two (2) years, or by both such  
22 fine and imprisonment.

23 SECTION 3. AMENDATORY 21 O.S. 2021, Section 916, is  
24 amended to read as follows:

1       Section 916. The following are the acts deemed to constitute  
2 disturbance of a religious meeting as prohibited by Section 915 of  
3 this title:

4       1. Uttering any profane discourse, committing any rude or  
5 indecent act, or making any unnecessary noise, either within the  
6 place where such meeting is held, or so near it as to disturb the  
7 order and solemnity of the meeting-;

8       2. ~~Exhibiting within one (1) mile, any shows or plays without a~~  
9 ~~license by the proper authority.~~ Knowingly obstructing, detaining,  
10 hindering, impeding, or blocking the entry of another person to or  
11 exit from a place where such meeting is held;

12       3. ~~Engaging in, or aiding or promoting within the like~~  
13 ~~distance, any racing of animals or gaming of any description.~~  
14 Knowingly approaching another person within eight (8) feet of such  
15 person, unless such other person consents, for the purpose of  
16 passing a leaflet or handbill to, displaying a sign to, or engaging  
17 in oral protest, education, or counseling with such other person in  
18 the public way or sidewalk area within a radius of one hundred (100)  
19 feet from any entrance door to a place where the meeting is held; or

20       4. Obstructing in any manner, without authority of law, within  
21 ~~the like distance~~ one (1) mile, the free passage along any highway  
22 to the place of ~~such~~ the meeting.

23       SECTION 4. It being immediately necessary for the preservation  
24 of the public peace, health or safety, an emergency is hereby

1 declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and  
2 be in full force from and after its passage and approval.

3

4 60-1-13465 GRS 04/09/25

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24