

State of Arkansas
95th General Assembly
Regular Session, 2025

A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1648

By: Representative S. Meeks

For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING MUNICIPAL FIRE DEPARTMENTS; TO ALLOW A MEMBER OF A MUNICIPAL FIRE DEPARTMENT BOMB SQUAD TO MAKE ARRESTS UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES; TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Subtitle

TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING MUNICIPAL FIRE DEPARTMENTS; TO ALLOW A MEMBER OF A MUNICIPAL FIRE DEPARTMENT BOMB SQUAD TO MAKE ARRESTS UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES; AND TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 14, Chapter 53, is amended to add an additional section to read as follows:

14-53-115. Bomb squad member — Authority to make arrests.

(a) A member of a municipal fire department bomb squad meeting the requirements of this section may make arrests for violations:

(1) Of explosives-related incidents or offenses; or

(2) When assisting a law enforcement agency in the state.

(b) A member of a municipal fire department bomb squad may make arrests under this section if he or she:

(1) Has successfully completed the part-time law enforcement officer course of study approved by the Arkansas Commission on Law



Enforcement Standards and Training and required for specialized police personnel; and

(2) Is acting in his or her official capacity as a member of a municipal fire department bomb squad.

(c) A member of a municipal fire department bomb squad who meets the requirements under subsection (a) of this section shall make arrests in accordance with § 16-81-101 et seq.

SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 16-81-106(f), concerning the authority to make arrests, is amended to read as follows:

(f) As used in this section, “certified law enforcement officer” includes ~~a~~:

(1) A full-time game warden of the Arkansas State Game and Fish Commission so long as the game warden shall not exercise his or her authority to the extent that any federal funds would be jeopardized; and

(2) A member of a municipal fire department bomb squad who meets the requirements under § 14-53-115.

SECTION 3. EMERGENCY CLAUSE. It is found and determined by the General Assembly of the State of Arkansas that a municipal fire department bomb squad member does not have the authority to arrest a perpetrator he or she may encounter in the course of his or her duty; that providing this authority to a municipal fire department bomb squad member is likely to prevent an imminent explosives hazard; and that this act is immediately necessary because residents of this state may be at risk during an explosives-related incident or offense, which threatens the public peace, health, and safety of residents of this state. Therefore, an emergency is declared to exist, and this act being immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health, and safety shall become effective on:

(1) The date of its approval by the Governor;

(2) If the bill is neither approved nor vetoed by the Governor, the expiration of the period of time during which the Governor may veto the bill; or

(3) If the bill is vetoed by the Governor and the veto is overridden, the date the last house overrides the veto.