



SENATOR JOHN PIPPY 2007-2008 LEGISLATIVE SESSION PRIME SPONSORED BILL SUMMARY

SENATE BILL 183

The bill makes it a third degree felony to impersonate a law enforcement officer, and a third degree misdemeanor to impersonate an active member of the armed forces or a veteran.

A person commits a felony of the third degree if by action, word or attire the person purports to be, or conveys the impression that the person is a law enforcement officer. The person must be trying to induce another person to submit to false official authority or to otherwise rely on the false impression created. Impersonating a public servant is currently graded as a misdemeanor of the second degree and is punishable by a prison sentence of not more than two years and a fine not exceeding \$5,000. A felony of the third degree is punishable by a prison sentence of not more than seven years and a fine not exceeding \$15,000.

If a person purports to be or to convey the impression that the person is an active member of the armed forces or a veteran, with the intent to induce another to submit to false official authority or to otherwise rely upon the false impression created, it will be cited as a misdemeanor of the third degree and be punishable by a prison sentence of not more than one year and a fine of not more than \$2,500.

Considering the types of crimes possible through the impersonation a law enforcement officer, such as fake traffic stops to exploit drivers, women, and the elderly, or being able to obtain entrance into someone's home, it is important to have a strict penalty for this type of impersonation. Crimes of this nature, while not frequent, have been happening recently across Pennsylvania. Additionally, impersonating a member of the armed forces or a veteran may make it easier for individuals to commit fraud and other related crimes, which is why this type of crime needs to be codified.