

Senate Bill 309

By: Senators Jackson of the 50th, Levetan of the 40th, Zamarripa of the 36th, Adelman of the 42nd, Unterman of the 45th and Squires of the 5th

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Chapter 15 of Title 16 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, the "Georgia
2 Street Gang Terrorism and Prevention Act," so as to change certain definitions; to prohibit
3 participation in a criminal street gang through committing one or more of certain offenses;
4 to provide for the admissibility of certain evidence at trial; to repeal conflicting laws; and for
5 other purposes.

6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

7 **SECTION 1.**

8 Chapter 15 of Title 16 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, the "Georgia Street Gang
9 Terrorism and Prevention Act," is amended by striking in its entirety Code Section 16-15-3,
10 relating to definitions, and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

11 "16-15-3.

12 As used in this chapter, the term:

13 (1) 'Criminal street gang' means any organization, association, or group of three or more
14 persons associated in fact, whether formal or informal, which engages in a pattern of
15 criminal gang activity as defined in paragraph (2) of this Code section. The existence of
16 such organization, association, or group of individuals associated in fact may be
17 established by evidence of a common name or common identifying signs, symbols,
18 tattoos, graffiti, or attire or other distinguishing characteristics.

19 (2) 'Pattern of criminal gang activity' means the commission, attempted commission,
20 conspiracy to commit, or solicitation, coercion, or intimidation of another person to
21 commit at least two of the following offenses, provided that at least one of these offenses
22 occurred after July 1, 1998, and the last of such offenses occurred within three years,
23 excluding any periods of imprisonment, of prior criminal gang activity:

24 (A) Any offense defined as racketeering activity by Code Section 16-14-3;

25 (B) Any offense defined in Article 7 of Chapter 5 of this title, relating to stalking;

1 (C) Any offense defined in Code Section 16-6-1 as rape, 16-6-2 as aggravated sodomy,
2 16-6-3 as statutory rape, or 16-6-22.2 as aggravated sexual battery;

3 (D) Any offense defined in Article 3 of Chapter 10 of this title, relating to escape and
4 other offenses related to confinement;

5 (E) Any offense defined in Article 4 of Chapter 11 of this title, relating to dangerous
6 instrumentalities and practices;

7 (F) Any offense defined in Code Section 42-5-15, 42-5-16, 42-5-17, 42-5-18, or
8 42-5-19, relating to the security of state or county correctional facilities; and

9 (G) Any offense defined in Code Section 49-4A-11, relating to aiding or encouraging
10 a child to escape from custody;

11 (H) Any offense of criminal trespass or criminal damage to property resulting from any
12 act of painting on, tagging, marking on, writing on, or otherwise depositing any form
13 of graffiti on the property of another;

14 (I) Any criminal offense designated a felony in this state or any other state or the
15 United States; any offense punishable by more than one year imprisonment in any other
16 state or the United States; or any offense committed in any other state which would
17 constitute a felony if committed in this state; and

18 (J) Any criminal offense committed in this state or any other state, district, or territory
19 that involves the use of violence, possession of a weapon, or the use of a weapon,
20 whether such act is designated a felony or not, and regardless of the maximum sentence
21 which could be imposed or was actually imposed for such offense."

22 SECTION 2.

23 Said chapter is further amended by striking in its entirety subsection (a) of Code Section
24 16-15-4, relating to the prohibition against participation in criminal street gang activity, and
25 inserting in lieu thereof the following:

26 "(a) It shall be unlawful for any person employed by or associated with a criminal street
27 gang to conduct or participate in such criminal street gang through ~~a pattern of criminal~~
28 ~~gang activity~~ the commission of any offense enumerated in paragraph (2) of Code section
29 16-15-3."

30 SECTION 3.

31 Said chapter is further amended by inserting at the end thereof the following:

32 "16-15-9.

33 The commission of any offense enumerated in paragraph (2) of Code Section 16-15-3 by
34 any member of a criminal street gang shall be admissible in any trial or proceeding for the

1 purpose of proving the existence of the criminal street gang and the pattern of criminal
2 gang activity.”

3 **SECTION 4.**

4 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.