

Senate Bill 470

By: Senators Albers of the 56th, Robertson of the 29th, Bearden of the 30th, Kirkpatrick of the 32nd, Payne of the 54th and others

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Article 2 of Chapter 11 of Title 16 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,
2 relating to offenses against public order, so as to prohibit the possession, use, operation,
3 manufacture, sale, offer for sale, distribution, or import of signal jammers; to establish
4 criminal offenses; to provide for penalties; to require that certain penalties shall not be
5 suspended, stayed, deferred, or withheld by the sentencing court; to provide for the
6 designation of signal jammers and other property as contraband; to provide for the forfeiture
7 of property used directly or indirectly, or intended for use in any manner, to facilitate a
8 violation of the criminal offenses established in this Act; to specifically authorize the
9 Attorney General to commence forfeiture proceedings; to provide for exemptions; to provide
10 for definitions; to provide a short title; to provide an effective date; to provide for related
11 matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

12 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

13 **SECTION 1.**

14 This Act shall be known and may be cited as the "Emergency & Public Safety Signal
15 Protection Act."

16

SECTION 2.

17 Article 2 of Chapter 11 of Title 16 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to
18 offenses against public order, is amended by adding a new Code section to read as follows:

19 "16-11-46.

20 (a) As used in this Code section, the term:

21 (1) 'Communication signal' means a signal used in a communications system to transfer
22 information from a transmitter to a receiver. Communication signals include, but are not
23 limited to, analog signals and digital signals.

24 (2) 'Critical infrastructure' means publicly or privately owned facilities, systems,
25 functions, or assets, whether physical or virtual, providing or distributing services for the
26 benefit of the public, including, but not limited to, energy, fuel, water, agriculture,
27 healthcare, finance, communications, education, or any other vital public service.

28 (3) 'Property' shall have the same meaning as set forth in Code Section 9-16-2.

29 (4) 'Public agency' means the state and any city, county, city and county, municipal
30 corporation, chartered organization, public district, or public authority located in whole
31 or in part within this state which provides or has authority to provide fire-fighting, law
32 enforcement, ambulance, medical, or other emergency services.

33 (5) 'Public safety agency' means a functional division of a public agency which provides
34 fire-fighting, law enforcement, emergency medical, suicide prevention, emergency
35 management dispatching, poison control, drug prevention, child abuse, spouse abuse, or
36 other emergency services.

37 (6) 'Public safety answering point' means the public safety agency which receives
38 incoming 9-1-1 telephone calls and dispatches appropriate public safety agencies to
39 respond to such calls.

40 (7) 'Public transportation system' means all facilities, conveyances, and instrumentalities,
41 whether publicly or privately owned, that are used in or for publicly available services
42 for the transportation of individuals or cargo.

43 (8) 'Signal jammer' means any active or passive device, instrument, or apparatus which
44 in operation is capable of preventing, disrupting, delaying, degrading, or otherwise
45 interfering with the transmission of a communication signal over:

46 (A) Any wireless communications system, cellular communications system, radar
47 system, or global positioning system; or

48 (B) Any radio, telephone, or cable line, station, or system.

49 (9) 'Vital public service' includes water, sewerage, drainage, energy, electric, gas, natural
50 gas, telecommunications, internet, cable, navigation, collision avoidance, public
51 transportation systems, railroads, and other services the loss of which would have a
52 debilitating impact on the health, safety, or financial security of the public.

53 (b) Except as provided in subsection (g) of this Code section, it shall be unlawful for any
54 person to possess, use, or operate a signal jammer with the intent to prevent, disrupt, delay,
55 degrade, or otherwise interfere with the transmission of a communication signal over:

56 (1) Any wireless communications system, cellular communications system, radar system,
57 or global positioning system; or

58 (2) Any radio, telephone, or cable line, station, or system.

59 (c)(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2) of this subsection, a person that violates
60 subsection (b) of this Code section shall be guilty of a felony and, upon conviction
61 thereof, shall be punished by imprisonment for not less than one nor more than seven
62 years, a fine of not more than \$10,000.00, or both.

63 (2) A person that violates subsection (b) of this Code section shall be guilty of a felony
64 and, upon conviction thereof, shall be punished by imprisonment for not less than one nor
65 more than ten years, a fine of not more than \$25,000.00, or both, if such violation
66 involves the possession, use, or operation of a signal jammer with the intent to prevent,
67 disrupt, delay, degrade, or otherwise interfere with the transmission of a communication
68 signal by, from, with, or to a public safety agency, a public safety answering point, or any
69 component of critical infrastructure.

70 (3) A violation of subsection (b) of this Code section shall not merge with any other
71 offense and the punishments prescribed by paragraphs (1) and (2) of this subsection shall
72 not be suspended, stayed, deferred, or withheld by the sentencing court.

73 (d) Except as provided in subsection (g) of this Code section, it shall be unlawful for any
74 person to possess, manufacture, sell, offer for sale, distribute, or import a signal jammer
75 in this state.

76 (e) A person that violates subsection (d) of this Code section shall be guilty of a felony
77 and, upon conviction thereof, shall be punished by imprisonment for not less than one nor
78 more than five years, a fine of not more than \$10,000.00, or both.

79 (f)(1) Any property which is, directly or indirectly, used or intended for use in any
80 manner to facilitate a violation of this Code section shall be declared to be contraband,
81 no person shall have a property right in such property, and such property shall be subject
82 to forfeiture.

83 (2) Any property subject to forfeiture pursuant to paragraph (1) of this subsection shall
84 be forfeited in accordance with the procedures set forth in Chapter 16 of Title 9, the
85 'Georgia Uniform Civil Forfeiture Procedure Act.'

86 (3) The Attorney General shall be specifically authorized to commence civil forfeiture
87 proceedings under this subsection.

88 (g) The following shall be exempt from the provisions of this Code section:

89 (1) The possession, use, operation, manufacture, sale, offer for sale, distribution, or
90 importation of a signal jammer in this state that is authorized under federal law or that has
91 been approved by the Federal Communications Commission or other federal agency
92 authorized to regulate signal jammers; and

93 (2) The authorized possession, use, or operation of a signal jammer by law enforcement
94 agencies and corrections agencies in this state:

95 (A) To prevent, disrupt, delay, degrade, or otherwise interfere with the transmission
96 of a communication signal that is sent to or from a contraband device in a correctional

97 facility or by or to an individual held in a correctional facility; provided, however, that
98 such possession, use, or operation shall be limited to the housing facility of the
99 correctional facility; and
100 (B) To prevent, disrupt, delay, degrade, or otherwise interfere with the transmission of
101 a communication signal that is sent to or from unmanned aircraft system as part of an
102 authorized counter unmanned aircraft systems (C-UAS) program or operation."

103 **SECTION 3.**

104 This Act shall become effective on July 1, 2026.

105 **SECTION 4.**

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