

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2007

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SENATE DRS55343-SA-12 (01/31)

Short Title: Street Gang Prevention Act. (Public)

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Sponsors: Senator Graham.

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Referred to:

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A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO ENACT THE NORTH CAROLINA STREET GANG PREVENTION ACT.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

**SECTION 1.** Chapter 14 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new Article to read:

"Article 13A.

"North Carolina Street Gang Prevention Act.

**"§ 14-50.15. Short title.**

This Article shall be known and may be cited as the "North Carolina Street Gang Prevention Act".

**"§ 14-50.16. Legislative findings and intent.**

(a) The General Assembly finds and declares that it is the right of every person to be secure and protected from fear, intimidation, and physical harm caused by the activities of violent groups and individuals. It is not the intent of this Article to interfere with the exercise of the constitutionally protected rights of freedom of expression and association. The General Assembly recognizes the constitutional right of every citizen to harbor and express beliefs on any lawful subject whatsoever, to associate lawfully with others who share similar beliefs, to petition lawfully constituted authority for a redress of perceived grievances, and to participate in the electoral process.

(b) The General Assembly, however, further finds that the State of North Carolina is in a state of crisis that has been caused by violent street gangs whose members threaten, terrorize, and commit a multitude of crimes against the peaceful citizens of their neighborhoods. These activities, both individually and collectively, present a clear and present danger to public order and safety and are not constitutionally protected.

1       (c) The General Assembly finds that there are criminal street gangs operating in  
2 North Carolina and that the number of gang-related murders is increasing. It is the intent  
3 of the General Assembly in enacting this Article to seek the eradication of criminal  
4 activity by street gangs by focusing upon patterns of criminal gang activity and upon the  
5 organized nature of street gangs which together are the chief source of terror created by  
6 street gangs.

7       (d) The General Assembly finds that prevention of violent gang activity and  
8 efforts to prevent violent gangs' ability to recruit additional members are effective  
9 means of addressing the issues created by gangs in this State.

10       (e) The General Assembly further finds that an effective means of punishing and  
11 detering the criminal activities of street gangs is through forfeiture of the profits,  
12 proceeds, and instrumentalities acquired, accumulated, or used by street gangs.

13 **"§ 14-50.17. Definitions.**

14       The following definitions apply in this Article:

15       (1) 'Criminal street gang' or 'street gang' means any ongoing organization,  
16 association, or group of three or more persons, whether formal or  
17 informal, having as one of its primary activities the commission of one  
18 or more felony offenses, or delinquent acts that would be felonies if  
19 committed by an adult, which has a common name, common  
20 identifying sign or symbol, and three or more members individually or  
21 collectively engaged in or who have engaged in criminal gang activity.

22       (2) 'Pattern of criminal gang activity' means the commission, attempted  
23 commission, conspiracy to commit, or solicitation, coercion, or  
24 intimidation of another person to commit at least two of the following  
25 offenses, provided that at least one of these offenses occurred after  
26 December 1, 2007, and the last of the offenses occurred within three  
27 years, excluding any periods of imprisonment, of prior criminal gang  
28 activity:

29       a. Any offense under Article 5 of Chapter 90 of the General  
30 Statutes (Controlled Substances Act).

31       b. Any offense under Chapter 14 of the General Statutes except  
32 Articles 9, 22A, 38, 40, 43, 46, 47, 59 thereof; and further  
33 excepting G.S. 14-78.1, 14-82, 14-86, 14-145, 14-179, 14-183,  
34 14-184, 14-186, 14-190.9, 14-195, 14-197, 14-201, 14-247,  
35 14-248, 14-313 thereof.

36       (3) 'Criminal street gang member' means a person to whom two or more of  
37 the following criteria apply:

38       a. Admits to criminal street gang membership;

39       b. Is identified as a criminal street gang member by a documented  
40 reliable informant;

41       c. Resides in or frequents a particular criminal street gang's area  
42 and adopts its style of dress, its use of hand signals or its tattoos  
43 and associates with known criminal street gang members;

- 1           d.     Has been arrested more than once in the company of known  
2                 criminal street gang members for offenses which are consistent  
3                 with usual criminal street gang activity;  
4           e.     Is identified as a criminal street gang member by physical  
5                 evidence, such as photographs or other documentation;  
6           f.     Has been stopped in the company of known criminal street gang  
7                 members four or more times;  
8           g.     Has been identified as a criminal street gang member by other  
9                 law enforcement agencies; or  
10          h.     Is identified as a criminal street gang member by a parent or  
11                 guardian.

12 **"§ 14-50.18. Participation in criminal street gang activity prohibited.**

13         (a)     It is unlawful for any person employed by or associated with a criminal street  
14         gang to conduct or participate in the criminal street gang through a pattern of criminal  
15         gang activity.

16         (b)     It is unlawful for any person to acquire or maintain, directly or indirectly,  
17         through a pattern of criminal gang activity or proceeds derived therefrom, any interest in  
18         or control of any real or personal property of any nature, including money.

19         (c)     It is unlawful for any person who acts as an organizer, supervisor, or in any  
20         other position of management with regard to a criminal street gang to engage in, directly  
21         or indirectly, or conspire to engage in, a pattern of criminal gang activity.

22         (d)     It is unlawful for any person to cause, encourage, solicit, or coerce another to  
23         participate in a criminal street gang.

24         (e)     It is unlawful for any person to communicate, directly or indirectly, with  
25         another any threat of injury or damage to the person or property of the other person or to  
26         any associate or relative of the other person with the intent to deter the person from  
27         assisting a member or associate of a criminal street gang to withdraw from such  
28         criminal street gang.

29         (f)     It is unlawful for any person to communicate, directly or indirectly, with  
30         another any threat of injury or damage to the person or property of the other person or to  
31         any associate or relative of the other person with the intent to punish or retaliate against  
32         the person for having withdrawn from a criminal street gang.

33         (g)     Any person who violates this section shall be punished as follows:

34             (1)     A person who violates subsection (a) or (b) of this section shall, in  
35             addition to any other penalty imposed by law, be punished as a Class  
36             H felon.

37             (2)     A person who violates subsection (a), (b), (d), (e), or (f) of this section  
38             may, if the person also violates subsection (c) of this section in the  
39             same course of conduct, in addition to any other penalty provided by  
40             law, be punished by imprisonment for an additional 10 years which  
41             shall be served consecutively to any other sentence imposed on the  
42             person by law.

1           (3) A person who violates subsection (d), (e), or (f) of this section shall, in  
2           addition to any other penalty provided by law, be punished as a Class  
3           H felon.

4           (h) Any crime committed in violation of this section shall be considered a  
5           separate offense.

6           "**§ 14-50.19. Enhanced offense for criminal gang activity.**

7           Unless a different classification is expressly stated, a person who is convicted of an  
8           offense that is committed for the benefit of, at the direction of, or in association with,  
9           any criminal street gang, is guilty of an offense that is one class higher than the offense  
10           committed. A Class A1 misdemeanor shall be enhanced to a Class I felony under this  
11           section.

12           This section does not apply to the offenses set forth in G.S. 14-50.18.

13           "**§ 14-50.20. Reports of disposition; criminal street gang activity.**

14           When a defendant is found guilty of an offense, the presiding judge shall determine  
15           whether the offense was committed for the benefit of, at the direction of, or in  
16           association with, any criminal street gang. If the judge determines that the offense so  
17           qualifies, then the judge shall indicate on the form reflecting the judgment that the  
18           offense involved criminal street gang activity. The clerk of court shall ensure that the  
19           official record of the defendant's conviction includes the court's determination.

20           "**§ 14-50.21. Contraband, seizure, and forfeiture.**

21           (a) All of the following are declared to be contraband, and no person shall have a  
22           property interest in them:

23                   (1) All property that is directly or indirectly used or intended for use in  
24                   any manner to facilitate a violation of this Article.

25                   (2) Any property constituting or derived from gross profits or other  
26                   proceeds obtained from a violation of this Article.

27           (b) In any action under this section, the court may enter a restraining order in  
28           connection with any interest that is subject to forfeiture.

29           (c) Within 60 days of the date of the seizure of contraband pursuant to this  
30           section, the district attorney or the Attorney General shall initiate a forfeiture  
31           proceeding as provided in G.S. 14-2.3.

32           "**§ 14-50.22. Local ordinances not preempted by State law.**

33           Nothing in this Article shall prevent a local governing body from adopting and  
34           enforcing ordinances relating to gangs and gang violence that are consistent with this  
35           Article. Where local laws duplicate or supplement the provisions of this Article, this  
36           Article shall be construed as providing alternative remedies and not as preempting the  
37           field.

38           "**§ 14-50.23. Real property used by criminal street gangs declared a public**  
39           nuisance; abatement.

40           Any real property that is erected, established, maintained, owned, leased, or used by  
41           any criminal street gang for the purpose of conducting criminal gang activity shall  
42           constitute a public nuisance and may be abated as provided by Article 1 of Chapter 19  
43           of the General Statutes. If the property is owned by a person who is not a member of the

1 criminal street gang, this section shall apply only if the person has knowledge of the  
2 criminal gang activity.

3 **"§ 14-50.24. Matters proved in criminal trial court.**

4 A conviction of an offense defined as criminal gang activity shall preclude the  
5 defendant from contesting any factual matters determined in the criminal proceeding in  
6 any subsequent civil action or proceeding based on the same conduct.

7 **"§ 14-50.25. Applicability to juveniles under the age of sixteen.**

8 The provisions of this Article shall not apply to juveniles under the age of 16."

9 **SECTION 2.** Chapter 14 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a  
10 new section to read:

11 **"§ 14-34.9. Discharging a firearm from within an enclosure.**

12 Unless covered under some other provision of law providing greater punishment,  
13 any person who willfully or wantonly discharges or attempts to discharge a firearm, as a  
14 part of a pattern of criminal gang activity, from within any building, structure, motor  
15 vehicle, or other conveyance, erection, or enclosure toward a person or persons not  
16 within that enclosure shall be punished as a Class E felon."

17 **SECTION 3.** G.S. 15A-533 reads as rewritten:

18 **"§ 15A-533. Right to pretrial release in capital and noncapital cases.**

19 (a) A defendant charged with any crime, whether capital or noncapital, who is  
20 alleged to have committed this crime while still residing in or subsequent to his escape  
21 or during an unauthorized absence from involuntary commitment in a mental health  
22 facility designated or licensed by the Department of Health and Human Services, and  
23 whose commitment is determined to be still valid by the judge or judicial officer  
24 authorized to determine pretrial release to be valid, has no right to pretrial release. In  
25 lieu of pretrial release, however, the individual shall be returned to the treatment facility  
26 in which he was residing at the time of the alleged crime or from which he escaped or  
27 absented himself for continuation of his treatment pending the additional proceedings  
28 on the criminal offense.

29 (b) A defendant charged with a noncapital offense must have conditions of  
30 pretrial release determined, in accordance with G.S. 15A-534.

31 (c) A judge may determine in his discretion whether a defendant charged with a  
32 capital offense may be released before trial. If he determines release is warranted, the  
33 judge must authorize release of the defendant in accordance with G.S. 15A-534.

34 (d) ~~Subject to rebuttal by the person, it shall be presumed~~ There shall be a  
35 rebuttable presumption that no condition of release will reasonably assure the  
36 appearance of the person as required and the safety of the community if a judicial  
37 official finds the following:

- 38 (1) There is reasonable cause to believe that the person committed an  
39 offense involving trafficking in a controlled substance;  
40 (2) The drug trafficking offense was committed while the person was on  
41 pretrial release for another offense; and  
42 (3) The person has been previously convicted of a Class A through E  
43 felony or an offense involving trafficking in a controlled substance and

1 not more than five years has elapsed since the date of conviction or the  
2 person's release from prison for the offense, whichever is later.

3 (e) There shall be a rebuttable presumption that no condition of release will  
4 reasonably assure the appearance of the person as required and the safety of the  
5 community, if a judicial official finds the following:

6 (1) There is reasonable cause to believe that the person committed an  
7 offense for the benefit of, at the direction of, or in association with,  
8 any criminal street gang, as defined in G.S. 14-50.17;

9 (2) The offense described in subdivision (1) of this subsection was  
10 committed while the person was on pretrial release for another offense;  
11 and

12 (3) The person has been previously convicted of an offense described in  
13 G.S. 14-50.17, and not more than five years has elapsed since the date  
14 of conviction or the person's release for the offense, whichever is later.

15 ~~Such person~~ Persons who are considered for bond under the provisions of subsections  
16 (d) and (e) of this section may only be released by a district or superior court judge upon  
17 a finding that there is a reasonable assurance that the person will appear and release  
18 does not pose an unreasonable risk of harm to the community."

19 **SECTION 4.** G.S. 15A-1340.16(d) reads as rewritten:

20 "(d) Aggravating Factors. – The following are aggravating factors:

21 (1) The defendant induced others to participate in the commission of the  
22 offense or occupied a position of leadership or dominance of other  
23 participants.

24 (2) The defendant joined with more than one other person in committing  
25 the offense and was not charged with committing a conspiracy.

26 (2a) The offense was committed for the benefit of, or at the direction of,  
27 any criminal street gang, with the specific intent to promote, further, or  
28 assist in any criminal conduct by gang members, and the defendant  
29 was not charged with committing a conspiracy. A "criminal street  
30 gang" means any ongoing organization, association, or group of three  
31 or more persons, whether formal or informal, having as one of its  
32 primary activities the commission of felony or violent misdemeanor  
33 offenses, or delinquent acts that would be felonies or violent  
34 misdemeanors if committed by an adult, and having a common name  
35 or common identifying sign, colors, or symbols.

36 (3) The offense was committed for the purpose of avoiding or preventing a  
37 lawful arrest or effecting an escape from custody.

38 (4) The defendant was hired or paid to commit the offense.

39 (5) The offense was committed to disrupt or hinder the lawful exercise of  
40 any governmental function or the enforcement of laws.

41 (6) The offense was committed against or proximately caused serious  
42 injury to a present or former law enforcement officer, employee of the  
43 Department of Correction, jailer, fireman, emergency medical  
44 technician, ambulance attendant, justice or judge, clerk or assistant or

1 deputy clerk of court, magistrate, prosecutor, juror, or witness against  
2 the defendant, while engaged in the performance of that person's  
3 official duties or because of the exercise of that person's official duties.

4 (7) The offense was especially heinous, atrocious, or cruel.

5 (8) The defendant knowingly created a great risk of death to more than  
6 one person by means of a weapon or device which would normally be  
7 hazardous to the lives of more than one person.

8 (9) The defendant held public office at the time of the offense and the  
9 offense related to the conduct of the office.

10 (10) The defendant was armed with or used a deadly weapon at the time of  
11 the crime.

12 (11) The victim was very young, or very old, or mentally or physically  
13 infirm, or handicapped.

14 (12) The defendant committed the offense while on pretrial release on  
15 another charge.

16 (13) The defendant involved a person under the age of 16 in the  
17 commission of the crime.

18 (14) The offense involved an attempted or actual taking of property of great  
19 monetary value or damage causing great monetary loss, or the offense  
20 involved an unusually large quantity of contraband.

21 (15) The defendant took advantage of a position of trust or confidence,  
22 including a domestic relationship, to commit the offense.

23 (16) The offense involved the sale or delivery of a controlled substance to a  
24 minor.

25 (16a) The offense is the manufacture of methamphetamine and was  
26 committed where a person under the age of 18 lives, was present, or  
27 was otherwise endangered by exposure to the drug, its ingredients, its  
28 by-products, or its waste.

29 (17) The offense for which the defendant stands convicted was committed  
30 against a victim because of the victim's race, color, religion,  
31 nationality, or country of origin.

32 (18) The defendant does not support the defendant's family.

33 (18a) The defendant has previously been adjudicated delinquent for an  
34 offense that would be a Class A, B1, B2, C, D, or E felony if  
35 committed by an adult.

36 (19) The serious injury inflicted upon the victim is permanent and  
37 debilitating.

38 (20) Any other aggravating factor reasonably related to the purposes of  
39 sentencing.

40 Evidence necessary to prove an element of the offense shall not be used to prove any  
41 factor in aggravation, and the same item of evidence shall not be used to prove more  
42 than one factor in aggravation. Evidence necessary to establish that an enhanced  
43 sentence is required under ~~G.S. 15A-1340.16~~ G.S. 15A-1340.16A, 15A-1340.16B, or  
44 14-50.19 may not be used to prove any factor in aggravation.

1 The judge shall not consider as an aggravating factor the fact that the defendant  
2 exercised the right to a jury trial."

3 SECTION 5. Chapter 15A of the General Statutes is amended by adding a  
4 new section to read:

5 **"§ 15A-1340.16E. Enhanced sentence if defendant is convicted of a Class A, B1,**  
6 **B2, C, D, or E felony that was committed for the benefit of, at the**  
7 **direction of, or in association with, any criminal street gang, and the**  
8 **defendant possessed, displayed, or discharged a firearm during the**  
9 **commission of the felony.**

10 (a) Notwithstanding G.S. 15A-1340.16A, a person who is convicted of a Class A,  
11 B1, B2, C, D, or E felony that was committed for the benefit of, at the direction of, or in  
12 association with, any criminal street gang as defined in G.S. 14-50.17, and who  
13 possessed, displayed, or discharged a firearm during the commission of the felony shall  
14 be punished pursuant to one of the following subdivisions:

15 (1) If the person possessed a firearm during the commission of the felony,  
16 the person shall, in addition to the punishment for the underlying  
17 felony, be sentenced to a minimum term of imprisonment for 60  
18 months.

19 (2) If the person displayed a firearm during the commission of the felony,  
20 the person shall, in addition to the punishment for the underlying  
21 felony, be sentenced to a minimum term of imprisonment for 84  
22 months.

23 (3) If the person discharged a firearm during the commission of the  
24 felony, the person shall, in addition to the punishment for the  
25 underlying felony, be sentenced to a minimum term of imprisonment  
26 for 120 months.

27 (b) An indictment or information for the Class A, B1, B2, C, D, or E felony shall  
28 allege in that indictment or information or in a separate indictment or information the  
29 facts set out in subsection (a) of this section. The pleading is sufficient if it alleges that  
30 the defendant committed the felony by possessing, displaying, or discharging the  
31 firearm. One pleading is sufficient for all Class A, B1, B2, C, D, or E felonies that are  
32 tried at a single trial.

33 (c) The State shall prove the issues set out in subsection (a) of this section  
34 beyond a reasonable doubt during the same trial in which the defendant is tried for the  
35 felony unless the defendant pleads guilty or no contest to the issues. If the defendant  
36 pleads guilty or no contest to the felony but pleads not guilty to the issues set out in  
37 subsection (a) of this section, then a jury shall be impaneled to determine the issues.

38 (d) The enhanced punishment provided by this section for the acts of possessing  
39 or displaying a firearm applies even if the firearm is incapable of firing.

40 (e) The court shall not suspend any sentence imposed under this section and shall  
41 not place a person sentenced under this section on probation for the sentence imposed  
42 under this section. Sentences imposed pursuant to this section shall be consecutive to all  
43 other sentences imposed and shall begin at the expiration of any other sentence being  
44 served by the defendant."



1           **SECTION 6.** The Revisor of Statutes shall recodify the existing  
2 G.S. 15A-1340.16B and subsequent statutes accordingly.

3           **SECTION 7.** G.S. 15A-1340.16A(c) reads as rewritten:

4           "(c) ~~If Except as provided in G.S. 15A-1340.16B,~~ if a person is convicted of a  
5 Class A, B1, B2, C, D, or E felony and it is found as provided in this section that: (i) the  
6 person committed the felony by using, displaying, or threatening the use or display of a  
7 firearm and (ii) the person actually possessed the firearm about his or her person, then  
8 the person shall have the minimum term of imprisonment to which the person is  
9 sentenced for that felony increased by 60 months. The maximum term of imprisonment  
10 shall be the maximum term that corresponds to the minimum term after it is increased  
11 by 60 months, as specified in G.S. 15A-1340.17(e) and (e1)."

12           **SECTION 8.** There is appropriated to the Department of Juvenile Justice  
13 and Delinquency Prevention the sum of ten million dollars (\$10,000,000) for the  
14 2007-2008 fiscal year to be used to provide, in conjunction with the Governor's Crime  
15 Commission, grants for street gang violence prevention and intervention programs.

16           The Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, in  
17 conjunction with the Governor's Crime Commission, shall develop the criteria for  
18 eligibility for these funds. The criteria shall include a matching requirement of  
19 twenty-five percent (25%), one-half of which may be in in-kind contributions, and  
20 presentation of a written plan for the services to be provided by the funds. Funds shall  
21 be available to public and private entities or agencies for juvenile or adult programs that  
22 meet the criteria established by the Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency  
23 Prevention and the Governor's Crime Commission.

24           The Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention shall report  
25 on the uses of these funds no later than April 1, 2008, to the House of Representatives  
26 Appropriations Subcommittee on Justice and Public Safety, the Senate Appropriations  
27 Subcommittee on Justice and Public Safety, and the Fiscal Research Division.

28           **SECTION 9.** Section 8 of this act becomes effective July 1, 2007. The  
29 remainder of this act becomes effective December 1, 2007, and applies to offenses  
30 committed on or after that date.