

**PENALTY FOR TARGETING LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER**

2017 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

**Chief Sponsor: Paul Ray**

Senate Sponsor: Curtis S. Bramble

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**LONG TITLE**

**General Description:**

This bill creates a specific penalty for targeting a law enforcement officer.

**Highlighted Provisions:**

This bill:

- ▶ defines "targeting a law enforcement officer";
- ▶ adds targeting a law enforcement officer to the aggravating factors for aggravated murder; and
- ▶ makes aggravated assault a first degree felony if a law enforcement officer is targeted.

**Money Appropriated in this Bill:**

None

**Other Special Clauses:**

None

**Utah Code Sections Affected:**

AMENDS:

**76-5-103**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2015, Chapter 430

**76-5-202**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2013, Chapter 81

ENACTS:

**76-5-210**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

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*Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

Section 1. Section **76-5-103** is amended to read:

30 **76-5-103. Aggravated assault -- Penalties.**

31 (1) Aggravated assault is an actor's conduct:

32 (a) that is:

33 (i) an attempt, with unlawful force or violence, to do bodily injury to another;

34 (ii) a threat, accompanied by a show of immediate force or violence, to do bodily injury  
35 to another; or

36 (iii) an act, committed with unlawful force or violence, that causes bodily injury to  
37 another or creates a substantial risk of bodily injury to another; and

38 (b) that includes the use of:

39 (i) a dangerous weapon as defined in Section 76-1-601; or

40 (ii) other means or force likely to produce death or serious bodily injury.

41 (2) (a) A violation of Subsection (1) is a third degree felony, except under Subsection  
42 (2)(b).

43 (b) A violation of Subsection (1) that results in serious bodily injury is a second degree  
44 felony.

45 (c) Aggravated assault that is a violation of Section 76-5-210, Targeting a law  
46 enforcement officer, and results in serious bodily injury is a first degree felony.

47 Section 2. Section **76-5-202** is amended to read:

48 **76-5-202. Aggravated murder.**

49 (1) Criminal homicide constitutes aggravated murder if the actor intentionally or  
50 knowingly causes the death of another under any of the following circumstances:

51 (a) the homicide was committed by a person who is confined in a jail or other  
52 correctional institution;

53 (b) the homicide was committed incident to one act, scheme, course of conduct, or  
54 criminal episode during which two or more persons were killed, or during which the actor  
55 attempted to kill one or more persons in addition to the victim who was killed;

56 (c) the actor knowingly created a great risk of death to a person other than the victim  
57 and the actor;

58 (d) the homicide was committed incident to an act, scheme, course of conduct, or  
59 criminal episode during which the actor committed or attempted to commit aggravated robbery,  
60 robbery, rape, rape of a child, object rape, object rape of a child, forcible sodomy, sodomy upon  
61 a child, forcible sexual abuse, sexual abuse of a child, aggravated sexual abuse of a child, child  
62 abuse as defined in Subsection 76-5-109(2)(a), or aggravated sexual assault, aggravated arson,  
63 arson, aggravated burglary, burglary, aggravated kidnapping, or kidnapping, or child  
64 kidnapping;

65 (e) the homicide was committed incident to one act, scheme, course of conduct, or  
66 criminal episode during which the actor committed the crime of abuse or desecration of a dead  
67 human body as defined in Subsection 76-9-704(2)(e);

68 (f) the homicide was committed for the purpose of avoiding or preventing an arrest of  
69 the defendant or another by a peace officer acting under color of legal authority or for the  
70 purpose of effecting the defendant's or another's escape from lawful custody;

71 (g) the homicide was committed for pecuniary gain;

72 (h) the defendant committed, or engaged or employed another person to commit the  
73 homicide pursuant to an agreement or contract for remuneration or the promise of remuneration  
74 for commission of the homicide;

75 (i) the actor previously committed or was convicted of:

76 (i) aggravated murder under this section;

77 (ii) attempted aggravated murder under this section;

78 (iii) murder, Section 76-5-203;

79 (iv) attempted murder, Section 76-5-203; or

80 (v) an offense committed in another jurisdiction which if committed in this state would  
81 be a violation of a crime listed in this Subsection (1)(i);

82 (j) the actor was previously convicted of:

83 (i) aggravated assault, Subsection 76-5-103(2);

84 (ii) mayhem, Section 76-5-105;

85 (iii) kidnapping, Section 76-5-301;

- 86 (iv) child kidnapping, Section 76-5-301.1;
- 87 (v) aggravated kidnapping, Section 76-5-302;
- 88 (vi) rape, Section 76-5-402;
- 89 (vii) rape of a child, Section 76-5-402.1;
- 90 (viii) object rape, Section 76-5-402.2;
- 91 (ix) object rape of a child, Section 76-5-402.3;
- 92 (x) forcible sodomy, Section 76-5-403;
- 93 (xi) sodomy on a child, Section 76-5-403.1;
- 94 (xii) aggravated sexual abuse of a child, Section 76-5-404.1;
- 95 (xiii) aggravated sexual assault, Section 76-5-405;
- 96 (xiv) aggravated arson, Section 76-6-103;
- 97 (xv) aggravated burglary, Section 76-6-203;
- 98 (xvi) aggravated robbery, Section 76-6-302;
- 99 (xvii) felony discharge of a firearm, Section 76-10-508.1; or
- 100 (xviii) an offense committed in another jurisdiction which if committed in this state
- 101 would be a violation of a crime listed in this Subsection (1)(j);
- 102 (k) the homicide was committed for the purpose of:
- 103 (i) preventing a witness from testifying;
- 104 (ii) preventing a person from providing evidence or participating in any legal
- 105 proceedings or official investigation;
- 106 (iii) retaliating against a person for testifying, providing evidence, or participating in
- 107 any legal proceedings or official investigation; or
- 108 (iv) disrupting or hindering any lawful governmental function or enforcement of laws;
- 109 (l) the victim is or has been a local, state, or federal public official, or a candidate for
- 110 public office, and the homicide is based on, is caused by, or is related to that official position,
- 111 act, capacity, or candidacy;
- 112 (m) the victim is or has been a peace officer, law enforcement officer, executive
- 113 officer, prosecuting officer, jailer, prison official, firefighter, judge or other court official, juror,

114 probation officer, or parole officer, and the victim is either on duty or the homicide is based on,  
115 is caused by, or is related to that official position, and the actor knew, or reasonably should  
116 have known, that the victim holds or has held that official position;

117 (n) the homicide was committed:

118 (i) by means of a destructive device, bomb, explosive, incendiary device, or similar  
119 device which was planted, hidden, or concealed in any place, area, dwelling, building, or  
120 structure, or was mailed or delivered; [or]

121 (ii) by means of any weapon of mass destruction as defined in Section 76-10-401; or

122 (iii) to target a law enforcement officer as defined in Section 76-5-210;

123 (o) the homicide was committed during the act of unlawfully assuming control of any  
124 aircraft, train, or other public conveyance by use of threats or force with intent to obtain any  
125 valuable consideration for the release of the public conveyance or any passenger, crew  
126 member, or any other person aboard, or to direct the route or movement of the public  
127 conveyance or otherwise exert control over the public conveyance;

128 (p) the homicide was committed by means of the administration of a poison or of any  
129 lethal substance or of any substance administered in a lethal amount, dosage, or quantity;

130 (q) the victim was a person held or otherwise detained as a shield, hostage, or for  
131 ransom;

132 (r) the homicide was committed in an especially heinous, atrocious, cruel, or  
133 exceptionally depraved manner, any of which must be demonstrated by physical torture, serious  
134 physical abuse, or serious bodily injury of the victim before death;

135 (s) the actor dismembers, mutilates, or disfigures the victim's body, whether before or  
136 after death, in a manner demonstrating the actor's depravity of mind; or

137 (t) the victim, at the time of the death of the victim:

138 (i) was younger than 14 years of age; and

139 (ii) was not an unborn child.

140 (2) Criminal homicide constitutes aggravated murder if the actor, with reckless

141 indifference to human life, causes the death of another incident to an act, scheme, course of

142 conduct, or criminal episode during which the actor is a major participant in the commission or  
143 attempted commission of:

- 144 (a) child abuse, Subsection [76-5-109\(2\)\(a\)](#);
- 145 (b) child kidnapping, Section [76-5-301.1](#);
- 146 (c) rape of a child, Section [76-5-402.1](#);
- 147 (d) object rape of a child, Section [76-5-402.3](#);
- 148 (e) sodomy on a child, Section [76-5-403.1](#); or
- 149 (f) sexual abuse or aggravated sexual abuse of a child, Section [76-5-404.1](#).

150 (3) (a) If a notice of intent to seek the death penalty has been filed, aggravated murder  
151 is a capital felony.

152 (b) If a notice of intent to seek the death penalty has not been filed, aggravated murder  
153 is a noncapital first degree felony punishable as provided in Section [76-3-207.7](#).

154 (c) (i) Within 60 days after arraignment of the defendant, the prosecutor may file notice  
155 of intent to seek the death penalty. The notice shall be served on the defendant or defense  
156 counsel and filed with the court.

157 (ii) Notice of intent to seek the death penalty may be served and filed more than 60  
158 days after the arraignment upon written stipulation of the parties or upon a finding by the court  
159 of good cause.

160 (d) Without the consent of the prosecutor, the court may not accept a plea of guilty to  
161 noncapital first degree felony aggravated murder during the period in which the prosecutor may  
162 file a notice of intent to seek the death penalty under Subsection (3)(c)(i).

163 (e) If the defendant was younger than 18 years of age at the time the offense was  
164 committed, aggravated murder is a noncapital first degree felony punishable as provided in  
165 Section [76-3-207.7](#).

166 (4) (a) It is an affirmative defense to a charge of aggravated murder or attempted  
167 aggravated murder that the defendant caused the death of another or attempted to cause the  
168 death of another under a reasonable belief that the circumstances provided a legal justification  
169 or excuse for the conduct although the conduct was not legally justifiable or excusable under

170 the existing circumstances.

171 (b) The reasonable belief of the actor under Subsection (4)(a) shall be determined from  
172 the viewpoint of a reasonable person under the then existing circumstances.

173 (c) This affirmative defense reduces charges only as follows:

174 (i) aggravated murder to murder; and

175 (ii) attempted aggravated murder to attempted murder.

176 (5) (a) Any aggravating circumstance described in Subsection (1) or (2) that constitutes  
177 a separate offense does not merge with the crime of aggravated murder.

178 (b) A person who is convicted of aggravated murder, based on an aggravating  
179 circumstance described in Subsection (1) or (2) that constitutes a separate offense, may also be  
180 convicted of, and punished for, the separate offense.

181 Section 3. Section **76-5-210** is enacted to read:

182 **76-5-210. Targeting a law enforcement officer defined.**

183 "Targeting a law enforcement officer" means the commission of any offense involving  
184 the unlawful use of force and violence against a law enforcement officer, causing serious  
185 bodily injury or death in furtherance of political or social objectives in order to intimidate or  
186 coerce a civilian population or to influence or affect the conduct of a government or a unit of  
187 government.