

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2003

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HOUSE BILL 1061

Short Title: Enhance Firearms Penalties.

(Public)

Sponsors: Representative Blust.

Referred to: Judiciary III.

April 10, 2003

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO EXTEND TO ALL FELONIES THE ADDITIONAL PUNISHMENT FOR THE POSSESSION, DISPLAY, OR DISCHARGE OF A FIREARM DURING THE COMMISSION OF A FELONY, AND TO INCREASE THE LENGTH OF ADDITIONAL PUNISHMENT.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

**SECTION 1.** G.S. 14-2.2 reads as rewritten:

"§ 14-2.2. Sentencing of a person convicted of a ~~Class A, B, B1, B2, C, D, or E~~ felony that ~~used, displayed, or threatened to use or display~~ possessed, displayed, or discharged a firearm during the commission of the crime; **confiscation and disposition of a firearm used in a felony.**

(a) ~~If a person is convicted of a Class A, B, B1, B2, C, D, or E felony and the person used, displayed, or threatened to use or display a firearm during the commission of the felony, the person shall, in addition to the punishment for the underlying felony, be sentenced to a minimum term of imprisonment for 60 months as provided by G.S. 15A-1340.16A.~~

(a1) A person who is convicted of a felony and who possessed, displayed, or discharged a firearm during the commission of the felony shall be punished pursuant to one of the following subdivisions:

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

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

(3) If a person is convicted of a felony and the person discharged a firearm during the commission of the felony, the person shall, in addition to

1                   the punishment for the underlying felony, be sentenced to a minimum  
2                   term of imprisonment for 120 months.

3           (a2) An indictment or information for the felony must allege in that indictment or  
4           information or in a separate indictment or information the facts set out in subsection  
5           (a1) of this section. The pleading is sufficient if it alleges that the defendant committed  
6           the felony by possessing, displaying, or discharging the firearm. One such pleading is  
7           sufficient for all felonies that are tried at a single trial.

8           (a3) The State must prove to the jury the issue set out in subsection (a1) of this  
9           section beyond a reasonable doubt during the same trial in which the defendant is tried  
10           for the felony. If the defendant pleads guilty or no contest to the felony but pleads not  
11           guilty to the issue set out in subsection (a1) of this section, then a jury shall be  
12           impaneled to determine that issue.

13           (a4) The enhanced punishment provided by this section for the acts of possessing  
14           or displaying a firearm applies even if the firearm is incapable of firing.

15           (b1) The court shall not suspend any sentence imposed under this section and shall  
16 not place a person sentenced under this section on probation for the sentence imposed  
17 under this section. Sentences imposed pursuant to this section shall be consecutive to all  
18 other sentences imposed and shall begin at the expiration of any other sentence being  
19 served by the person.

20           ~~(b) Subsection (a) of this section does not apply in any of the following~~  
21 ~~circumstances:~~

22                   ~~(1) The person is not sentenced to an active term of imprisonment.~~

23                   ~~(2) The evidence of the use, display, or threatened use or display of a~~  
24                   ~~firearm is needed to prove an element of the underlying Class A, B,~~  
25                   ~~B1, B2, C, D, or E felony.~~

26                   ~~(3) The person did not actually possess a firearm about his or her person.~~

27           (c) When a person is found to have personally used a firearm in the commission  
28 or attempted commission of a felony and the firearm is owned by that person, or the  
29 serial number on the firearm has been defaced such that ownership is not traceable, the  
30 court shall order that the firearm be confiscated and disposed of in any of the ways  
31 provided by G.S. 14-269.1 that the court in its discretion deems appropriate."

32           **SECTION 2.** G.S. 15A-1340.16A is repealed.

33           **SECTION 3.** This act becomes effective December 1, 2003, and applies to  
34 offenses committed on or after that date. Prosecutions for offenses committed before  
35 the effective date of this act are not abated or affected by this act, and the statutes that  
36 would be applicable but for this act remain applicable to those prosecutions.