

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2003

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SENATE BILL 693

Short Title: Amend Enhanced Sentences Laws.

(Public)

Sponsors: Senator Thomas.

Referred to: Judiciary II.

April 2, 2003

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO AMEND THE LAW REGARDING ENHANCED SENTENCES AS  
RECOMMENDED BY THE SENTENCING COMMISSION AND TO MAKE  
CONFORMING CHANGES.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

**SECTION 1.** G.S. 14-2.2 is repealed.

**SECTION 2.** G.S. 15A-1340.16A reads as rewritten:

**"§ 15A-1340.16A. Enhanced sentence if defendant is convicted of a Class A, B1, B2, C, D, or E felony and the defendant used, displayed, or threatened to use or display a firearm during the commission of the felony.**

(a) ~~If a person is convicted of a Class A, B1, B2, C, D, or E felony and the court finds that the person used, displayed, or threatened to use or display a firearm at the time of the felony, the court shall increase the minimum term of imprisonment to which the person is sentenced by 60 months. The court shall not suspend the 60 month minimum term of imprisonment imposed as an enhanced sentence under this section and shall not place any person sentenced under this section on probation for the enhanced sentence.~~

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

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

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

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

(a) If a person is convicted of a Class A, B1, B2, C, D, or E felony and it is found as provided in this section that: (i) the person committed the felony by using, displaying, or threatening the use or display of a firearm, and (ii) the person actually possessed the firearm about his or her person, then the person shall have the minimum term of imprisonment to which the person is sentenced for that felony increased by 60

1 months. The maximum term of imprisonment shall be the maximum term that  
2 corresponds to the minimum term after it is increased by 60 months, as specified in G.S.  
3 15A-1340.17(e) and (e1).

4 (b) An indictment or information for the Class A, B1, B2, C, D, or E felony shall  
5 allege in that indictment or information the facts set out in subsection (a) of this section.  
6 The pleading is sufficient if it alleges that the defendant committed the felony by using,  
7 displaying, or threatening the use or display of a firearm and the defendant actually  
8 possessed the firearm about the defendant's person. One pleading is sufficient for all  
9 Class A, B1, B2, C, D, or E felonies that are tried at a single trial.

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

15 (d) Subsection (a) of this section does not apply if the evidence of the use,  
16 display, or threatened use or display of the firearm is needed to prove an element of the  
17 felony or if the person is not sentenced to an active term of imprisonment."

18 **SECTION 3.** G.S. 15A-1340.16B reads as rewritten:

19 **"§ 15A-1340.16B. Life imprisonment without parole for a second or subsequent**  
20 **conviction of a Class B1 felony, felony if the victim was 13 years of age or**  
21 **younger and there are no mitigating factors.**

22 (a) ~~Notwithstanding the sentencing dispositions in G.S. 15A-1340.17, If a person~~  
23 ~~is convicted of a Class B1 felony shall be sentenced to life imprisonment without parole~~  
24 ~~if; and it is found as provided in this section that: (i)~~

25 (1) ~~The offense was committed~~ the person committed the felony against a  
26 victim who was 13 years of age or younger at the time of the ~~offense;~~  
27 offense, and

28 (2) ~~The~~ (ii) the person has one or more prior convictions of a Class B1  
29 felony; and

30 (3) ~~The court finds that there are no mitigating factors in accordance with~~  
31 ~~G.S. 15A-1340.16(e), felony, then the person shall be sentenced to life~~  
32 imprisonment without parole.

33 (b) ~~If the sentencing court finds that there are mitigating circumstances, then the~~  
34 ~~court shall sentence the person in accordance with G.S. 15A-1340.17.~~

35 (e) ~~A prior conviction of a Class B1 felony shall be proved in accordance with~~  
36 ~~G.S. 15A-1340.14.~~

37 (b) An indictment or information for the Class B1 felony shall allege in that  
38 indictment or information or in a separate indictment or information the facts set out in  
39 subsection (a) of this section. The pleading is sufficient if it alleges that the defendant  
40 committed the felony against a victim who was 13 years of age or younger at the time of  
41 the felony and had one or more prior convictions of a Class B1 felony. One pleading is  
42 sufficient for all Class B1 felonies that are tried at a single trial.

43 (c) The State shall prove the issue set out in subsection (a) of this section beyond  
44 a reasonable doubt during the same trial in which the defendant is tried for the felony

1 unless the defendant pleads guilty or no contest to that issue. The issue shall be  
2 presented in the same manner as provided in G.S. 15A-928(c). If the defendant pleads  
3 guilty or no contest to the felony but pleads not guilty to the issue set out in subsection  
4 (a) of this section, then a jury shall be impaneled to determine that issue.

5 (d) Subsection (a) of this section does not apply if there are mitigating factors  
6 present under G.S. 15A-1340.16(e)."

7 **SECTION 4.** G.S. 15A-1340.16C reads as rewritten:

8 **"§ 15A-1340.16C. Enhanced sentence if defendant is convicted of a felony and the**  
9 **defendant was wearing or had in his or her immediate possession a**  
10 **bullet-proof vest during the commission of the felony.**

11 (a) If a person is convicted of a felony and ~~the court finds that~~ it is found as  
12 provided in this section that the person was ~~wearing~~ wore or had in his or her immediate  
13 possession a bullet-proof vest at the time of the felony, then the person is guilty of a  
14 felony that is one class higher than the underlying felony for which the person was  
15 convicted.

16 ~~(b) This section does not apply if the evidence that the person possessed a~~  
17 ~~bullet proof vest is needed to prove an element of the underlying felony for which the~~  
18 ~~person was convicted. This section does not apply to law enforcement officers.~~

19 (b) An indictment or information for the felony shall allege in that indictment or  
20 information or in a separate indictment or information the facts set out in subsection (a)  
21 of this section. The pleading is sufficient if it alleges that the defendant committed the  
22 felony while wearing or having in the defendant's immediate possession a bulletproof  
23 vest. One pleading is sufficient for all felonies that are tried at a single trial.

24 (c) The State shall prove the issue set out in subsection (a) of this section beyond  
25 a reasonable doubt during the same trial in which the defendant is tried for the felony  
26 unless the defendant pleads guilty or no contest to that issue. If the defendant pleads  
27 guilty or no contest to the felony but pleads not guilty to the issue set out in subsection  
28 (a) of this section, then a jury shall be impaneled to determine that issue.

29 (d) Subsection (a) of this section does not apply if the evidence that the person  
30 wore or had in the person's immediate possession a bulletproof vest is needed to prove  
31 an element of the felony."

32 **SECTION 5.** This act is effective when it becomes law and applies to  
33 offenses committed on or after that date. Prosecutions for offenses occurring before the  
34 effective date of this act are not abated or affected by this act, and the statutes that  
35 would be applicable before this act remain applicable to those prosecutions.