



No Compromise

Testimony On HB 2572

House Bill 2572 and the proposed Dash 1 amendment define “Private paramilitary organization” as follows:

“Private paramilitary organization” means any group of three or more persons associating under a command structure for the purpose of functioning in public, or training to function in public, as a combat, combat support, law enforcement or security services unit.”

While the Dash 1 contains an exception for *“Members of an organization that is authorized under state or federal law to provide paramilitary, law enforcement or security services training or to engage in paramilitary activity or the provision of law enforcement or security services, when performing the functions authorized by law and, in the case of paramilitary activity and law enforcement services, when under the direction and control of a governmental authority.”* the exception is unclear about at what point “security services” cross the line into “paramilitary activity.” Is a private security guard or company acting outside of the law if it is not “under the direction of a governmental authority?”

Under Section 1(1) of the proposed amendment :

“A person commits the crime of unlawful paramilitary activity if the person knowingly, while acting as part of a private paramilitary organization or on behalf of or in furtherance of any objective of a private paramilitary organization, and while armed with a firearm, explosive or other dangerous weapon: (a) Publicly patrols, drills or engages in techniques capable of causing physical injury or death;”

Exactly what does “patrols” mean? What does it mean to “engage in techniques...?”

The intention of the bill does not matter. What matters is how it is used or misused by people authorized to enforce it.

I strongly urge the committee to draft amendments that will clarify and create a clear exemption for private security guards whose contributions to public safety are more important than ever.

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