

CS/SB 980 – Battery upon Public Transit Workers

This bill creates s. 341.0611, F.S., requiring that a public transit provider include a sign noting that the battery of a transit worker is a crime punishable by up to five years in prison, as well as creating and implementing a risk reduction program that includes conflict de-escalation training for public transit employees and agents, with the option of deploying battery mitigating infrastructure and technology on public transit vehicles. It also amends s. 784.07, F.S., clarifying that this statute applies to an assault or battery on a public transit employee or agent.

Large numbers come to prison each year with these offenses as primary. In FY 18-19, there were 400 new commitments to prison for these offenses and in FY 19-20, there were 286 new commitments. It is unknown how large the public transit employee or agent victim pool is, but simple battery is the most common felony offense and the incarceration rate is low (16.5% in FY 18-19 and 15.0% in FY 19-20). CJIC has heard bills with the same provisions in prior years and found them to have an insignificant impact due to low volume.

CONFERENCE ADOPTED ESTIMATE: Positive Insignificant

Requested by: Senate