

Regular Session, 2014

SENATE BILL NO. 90

BY SENATOR DORSEY-COLOMB

SPECIAL DISTRICTS. Provides for the creation of the "Neighborhood Watch Act".
(gov sig)

AN ACT

To enact Chapter 30-B of Title 33 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, to be comprised of R.S. 33:9100.31 through 9100.33, relative to neighborhood watch volunteers; to provide for procedures relative to neighborhood watch volunteers; to provide for training; to provide for duties and responsibilities; to provide for definitions; to provide for an effective date; and to provide for related matters.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

Section 1. Chapter 30-B of Title 33 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, comprised of R.S. 33:9100.31 through 9100.33, is hereby enacted to read as follows:

CHAPTER 30-B. NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH VOLUNTEERS

§9100.31. Short title

This Chapter shall known and may be cited as the "Neighborhood Watch Act".

§9100.32. Legislative findings and declaration

A. The legislature hereby finds and declares that in order to provide a uniform, expeditious, and equitable procedure, with due regard for the safety of all citizens and the rights of persons in interest, there are many efforts

1 currently underway to work to coordinate criminal justice partnerships to deal
2 with criminal activity in neighborhoods throughout the state. A neighborhood
3 watch program is one such effort. This program was replicated in Louisiana by
4 the Louisiana Sheriff's Association from the National Sheriff's Association.
5 This effort was designed to enlist the participation of citizens with law
6 enforcement to help reduce and prevent crime.

7 B. It is the intent of the legislature, therefore, to promote a coordinated
8 effort among law enforcement and neighborhood watch programs to stem the
9 tide of violence and criminal activity against the citizens of this state and
10 support strategies aimed at increasing both public understanding of the
11 problems in neighborhoods and increasing capacity for preventing crime in
12 their neighborhoods. Further, it is the intent of the legislature to address the
13 problems of crime in a systematic and effective manner by promoting and
14 expanding law enforcement agencies and neighborhood watch programs in
15 implementing specific strategies for crime prevention, citizen involvement, and
16 public education and training.

17 §9100.33. Duties and responsibilities

18 A. A neighborhood watch program established in this state shall adhere
19 to the following duties and responsibilities:

20 (1) Engage in a relationship with a law enforcement liaison specifically
21 assigned the responsibility of establishing, training, and supporting local
22 Neighborhood Watch groups.

23 (2) Participate in an annual training whereby the law enforcement
24 liaison will properly train Neighborhood Watch leaders, block captains and
25 members in areas ranging from setting goals to how to report suspicious
26 activities.

27 (3) Execute affidavits annually stating that:

28 (a) Members do not possess police powers and shall not carry weapons
29 or pursue vehicles.

1 **(b) Members shall alert police or deputies when encountering strange or**
2 **suspicious activity.**

3 **(c) Members shall never confront suspicious persons.**

4 **(d) Members shall wear identifiable gear and have state-issued**
5 **identification visible while patrolling.**

6 **(e) Members shall accept the advice of any and all emergency personnel**
7 **when reporting suspicious activities or crimes in progress.**

8 **(4) Register the Neighborhood Watch program with local, state, and**
9 **national law enforcement agencies to become part of the national initiative**
10 **against crime.**

11 **B. For the purpose of this Section, the following words shall have the**
12 **following definitions:**

13 **(1) "Neighborhood Watch" means a group of people living in the same**
14 **area who want to make their neighborhood safer by working together and in**
15 **conjunction with local law enforcement to reduce crime and improve their**
16 **quality of life.**

17 **(2) "Law Enforcement Liaison" means a law enforcement officer**
18 **specifically assigned the responsibility of establishing and supporting local**
19 **Neighborhood Watch groups.**

20 Section 2. This Act shall become effective upon signature by the governor or, if not
21 signed by the governor, upon expiration of the time for bills to become law without signature
22 by the governor, as provided by Article III, Section 18 of the Constitution of Louisiana. If
23 vetoed by the governor and subsequently approved by the legislature, this Act shall become
24 effective on the day following such approval.

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part
of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Michael Bell.

DIGEST

Dorsey-Colomb (SB 90)

Proposed law creates the "Neighborhood Watch Act".

Proposed law provides for the following duties and responsibilities for Neighborhood Watch

Programs:

- (1) Engage in a relationship with a law enforcement liaison specifically assigned the responsibility of establishing, training and supporting local Neighborhood Watch groups.
- (2) Participate in an annual training whereby the law enforcement liaison will properly train Neighborhood Watch leaders, block captains and members in areas ranging from setting goals to how to report suspicious activities.
- (3) Execute affidavits annually relative to the following:
 - (a) Active members emphasizing that they do not possess police powers and should not carry weapons or pursue vehicles.
 - (b) Members shall alert police or deputies when encountering strange activity.
 - (c) Members shall never confront suspicious persons.
 - (d) Members shall wear identifiable gear and have state-issued identification visible while patrolling.
 - (e) Members shall accept the advice of any and all emergency personnel when reporting suspicious activities or crimes in progress.
- (4) Register the Neighborhood Watch program with local, state, and national law enforcement agencies to become part of the national initiative against crime.

Proposed law provides for definitions.

Effective upon signature of the governor or lapse of time for gubernatorial action.

(Adds R.S. 33:9100.31-9100.33)