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H.B. 615
136th General Assembly

Bill Analysis

Version: As Introduced

Primary Sponsor: Rep. Williams

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SUMMARY

- Names the act the Retail Theft Prevention Act.
- Creates the offense of group retail theft and specifies that group retail theft is a fifth degree felony if a person commits the offense with one or more other persons but fewer than four persons, but can escalate as high as a second degree felony depending on the number of persons involved.
- Defines “retail property” and “retail value.”
- Makes necessary technical and cross-reference changes.

DETAILED ANALYSIS

Retail Theft Prevention Act

The bill names the act the Retail Theft Prevention Act.¹

Group retail theft

Continuing law prohibits a person, with purpose to deprive the owner of property or services, from knowingly obtaining or exerting control over the property or services in any of the following ways:²

- Without the consent of the owner or person authorized to give consent;
- Beyond the scope of the express or implied consent of the owner or person authorized to give consent;

¹ Section 3.

² R.C. 2913.02(B).

- By deception;
- By threat;
- By intimidation.

A person who violates this prohibition is guilty of theft.

The bill creates the offense of group retail theft by prohibiting a person from knowingly participating with one or more others to commit theft when the property involved is retail property with a retail value of \$1,000 or more from one or more retail establishments.³

Group retail theft is a fifth degree felony if a person commits the offense with one or more other persons but fewer than four persons. The bill increases the penalty for the offense to a third degree felony and there is a presumption of a prison term if a person commits group retail theft with four or more other persons. If a person commits group retail theft with ten or more other persons and the property stolen has a retail value of \$5,000 or more, group retail theft is a second degree felony.⁴

Definitions

As used in regards to the offense of group retail theft described above, the bill defines the following terms:⁵

“Retail property” means any tangible personal property displayed, held, stored, or offered for sale in or by a retail establishment.

“Retail value” means the full retail value of the retail property. In determining whether the retail value of retail property equals or exceeds \$1,000, the value of all retail property stolen from the retail establishment or retail establishments by the same person or persons within any 180-day period must be aggregated.

Technical changes

The bill makes necessary technical and cross-reference changes.⁶

HISTORY

Action	Date
Introduced	11-25-25

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³ R.C. 2913.02(C).

⁴ R.C. 2913.02(E).

⁵ R.C. 2913.02(A), by reference to R.C. 2923.31(R) and (T).

⁶ R.C. 2913.02 and 2929.14.