

As Introduced

136th General Assembly

Regular Session

2025-2026

S. B. No. 124

Senators Craig, Patton

A BILL

To amend sections 2903.13 and 2917.41 and to enact
section 306.20 of the Revised Code to increase
the penalty for assault when the victim is an
operator of an Ohio transit system bus or rail
car; to authorize Ohio transit systems to post a
sign regarding abuse or assault of staff; and to
increase the penalty for evading payment of the
known fares of a public transportation system.

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BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF OHIO:

Section 1. That sections 2903.13 and 2917.41 be amended
and section 306.20 of the Revised Code be enacted to read as
follows:

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Sec. 306.20. (A) Any Ohio transit system may post the
notice described in division (B) of this section in accordance
with this division. An Ohio transit system that decides to post
the notice shall consider posting it in a conspicuous location
in all of the transit system's buses and rail cars.

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(B) A notice posted pursuant to division (A) of this
section shall include, at a minimum, all of the following
statements and information:

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"WE WILL NOT TOLERATE 20
any form of threatening or 21
aggressive behavior 22
toward our staff. 23
Assaults against our staff might 24
result in a felony conviction. 25
All staff have the right to carry out 26
their work without fearing for their safety." 27
(C) As used in this section, "Ohio transit system" has the 28
same meaning as in section 2305.33 of the Revised Code. 29
Sec. 2903.13. (A) No person shall knowingly cause or 30
attempt to cause physical harm to another or to another's 31
unborn. 32
(B) No person shall recklessly cause serious physical harm 33
to another or to another's unborn. 34
(C) (1) Whoever violates this section is guilty of assault, 35
and the court shall sentence the offender as provided in this 36
division and divisions (C) (1), (2), (3), (4), (5), (6), (7), 37
(8), (9), ~~and~~ (10), and (11) of this section. Except as 38
otherwise provided in division (C) (2), (3), (4), (5), (6), (7), 39
(8), ~~or~~ (9), or (10) of this section, assault is a misdemeanor 40
of the first degree. 41
(2) Except as otherwise provided in this division, if the 42
offense is committed by a caretaker against a person with a 43
functional impairment under the caretaker's care, assault is a 44
felony of the fourth degree. If the offense is committed by a 45
caretaker against a person with a functional impairment under 46

the caretaker's care, if the offender previously has been 47
convicted of or pleaded guilty to a violation of this section or 48
section 2903.11 or 2903.16 of the Revised Code, and if in 49
relation to the previous conviction the offender was a caretaker 50
and the victim was a person with a functional impairment under 51
the offender's care, assault is a felony of the third degree. 52

(3) If the offense occurs in or on the grounds of a state 53
correctional institution or an institution of the department of 54
youth services, the victim of the offense is an employee of the 55
department of rehabilitation and correction or the department of 56
youth services, and the offense is committed by a person 57
incarcerated in the state correctional institution or by a 58
person institutionalized in the department of youth services 59
institution pursuant to a commitment to the department of youth 60
services, assault is a felony of the third degree. 61

(4) If the offense is committed in any of the following 62
circumstances, assault is a felony of the fifth degree: 63

(a) The offense occurs in or on the grounds of a local 64
correctional facility, the victim of the offense is an employee 65
of the local correctional facility or a probation department or 66
is on the premises of the facility for business purposes or as a 67
visitor, and the offense is committed by a person who is under 68
custody in the facility subsequent to the person's arrest for 69
any crime or delinquent act, subsequent to the person's being 70
charged with or convicted of any crime, or subsequent to the 71
person's being alleged to be or adjudicated a delinquent child. 72

(b) The offense occurs off the grounds of a state 73
correctional institution and off the grounds of an institution 74
of the department of youth services, the victim of the offense 75
is an employee of the department of rehabilitation and 76

correction, the department of youth services, or a probation 77
department, the offense occurs during the employee's official 78
work hours and while the employee is engaged in official work 79
responsibilities, and the offense is committed by a person 80
incarcerated in a state correctional institution or 81
institutionalized in the department of youth services who 82
temporarily is outside of the institution for any purpose, by a 83
parolee, by an offender under transitional control, under a 84
community control sanction, or on an escorted visit, by a person 85
under post-release control, or by an offender under any other 86
type of supervision by a government agency. 87

(c) The offense occurs off the grounds of a local 88
correctional facility, the victim of the offense is an employee 89
of the local correctional facility or a probation department, 90
the offense occurs during the employee's official work hours and 91
while the employee is engaged in official work responsibilities, 92
and the offense is committed by a person who is under custody in 93
the facility subsequent to the person's arrest for any crime or 94
delinquent act, subsequent to the person being charged with or 95
convicted of any crime, or subsequent to the person being 96
alleged to be or adjudicated a delinquent child and who 97
temporarily is outside of the facility for any purpose or by a 98
parolee, by an offender under transitional control, under a 99
community control sanction, or on an escorted visit, by a person 100
under post-release control, or by an offender under any other 101
type of supervision by a government agency. 102

(d) The victim of the offense is a school teacher or 103
administrator or a school bus operator, and the offense occurs 104
in a school, on school premises, in a school building, on a 105
school bus, or while the victim is outside of school premises or 106
a school bus and is engaged in duties or official 107

responsibilities associated with the victim's employment or 108
position as a school teacher or administrator or a school bus 109
operator, including, but not limited to, driving, accompanying, 110
or chaperoning students at or on class or field trips, athletic 111
events, or other school extracurricular activities or functions 112
outside of school premises. 113

(5) If the assault is committed in any of the following 114
circumstances, assault is a felony of the fourth degree: 115

(a) The victim of the offense is a peace officer or an 116
investigator of the bureau of criminal identification and 117
investigation, a firefighter, or a person performing emergency 118
medical service, while in the performance of the officer's, 119
investigator's, firefighter's, or person's official duties. 120

(b) The victim of the offense is an emergency service 121
responder, the offender knows or reasonably should know that the 122
victim is an emergency service responder, and it is the 123
offender's specific purpose to commit the offense against an 124
emergency service responder. 125

(c) The victim of the offense is a family or household 126
member or co-worker of a person who is an emergency service 127
responder, the offender knows or reasonably should know that the 128
victim is a family or household member or co-worker of an 129
emergency service responder, and it is the offender's specific 130
purpose to commit the offense against a family or household 131
member or co-worker of an emergency service responder. 132

(6) If the offense is a felony of the fourth degree under 133
division (C) (5) (a) of this section, if the victim of the offense 134
is a peace officer or an investigator of the bureau of criminal 135
identification and investigation, and if the victim suffered 136

serious physical harm as a result of the commission of the 137
offense, the court, pursuant to division (F) of section 2929.13 138
of the Revised Code, shall impose as a mandatory prison term one 139
of the prison terms prescribed for a felony of the fourth degree 140
that is at least twelve months in duration. 141

(7) If the victim of the offense is an officer or employee 142
of a public children services agency or a private child placing 143
agency and the offense relates to the officer's or employee's 144
performance or anticipated performance of official 145
responsibilities or duties, assault is either a felony of the 146
fifth degree or, if the offender previously has been convicted 147
of or pleaded guilty to an offense of violence, the victim of 148
that prior offense was an officer or employee of a public 149
children services agency or private child placing agency, and 150
that prior offense related to the officer's or employee's 151
performance or anticipated performance of official 152
responsibilities or duties, a felony of the fourth degree. 153

(8) If the victim of the offense is a health care 154
professional of a hospital, a health care worker of a hospital, 155
or a security officer of a hospital whom the offender knows or 156
has reasonable cause to know is a health care professional of a 157
hospital, a health care worker of a hospital, or a security 158
officer of a hospital, if the victim is engaged in the 159
performance of the victim's duties, and if the hospital offers 160
de-escalation or crisis intervention training for such 161
professionals, workers, or officers, assault is one of the 162
following: 163

(a) Except as otherwise provided in division (C) (8) (b) of 164
this section, assault committed in the specified circumstances 165
is a misdemeanor of the first degree. Notwithstanding the fine 166

specified in division (A) (2) (a) of section 2929.28 of the 167
Revised Code for a misdemeanor of the first degree, in 168
sentencing the offender under this division and if the court 169
decides to impose a fine, the court may impose upon the offender 170
a fine of not more than five thousand dollars. 171

(b) If the offender previously has been convicted of or 172
pleaded guilty to one or more assault or homicide offenses 173
committed against hospital personnel, assault committed in the 174
specified circumstances is a felony of the fifth degree. 175

(9) If the victim of the offense is a judge, magistrate, 176
prosecutor, or court official or employee whom the offender 177
knows or has reasonable cause to know is a judge, magistrate, 178
prosecutor, or court official or employee, and if the victim is 179
engaged in the performance of the victim's duties, assault is 180
one of the following: 181

(a) Except as otherwise provided in division (C) (9) (b) of 182
this section, assault committed in the specified circumstances 183
is a misdemeanor of the first degree. In sentencing the offender 184
under this division, if the court decides to impose a fine, 185
notwithstanding the fine specified in division (A) (2) (a) of 186
section 2929.28 of the Revised Code for a misdemeanor of the 187
first degree, the court may impose upon the offender a fine of 188
not more than five thousand dollars. 189

(b) If the offender previously has been convicted of or 190
pleaded guilty to one or more assault or homicide offenses 191
committed against justice system personnel, assault committed in 192
the specified circumstances is a felony of the fifth degree. 193

(10) If the victim of the offense is an operator of an 194
Ohio transit system bus or Ohio transit system rail car or a 195

contracted employee providing that service to an Ohio transit 196
system, if the offender knows or has reasonable cause to know 197
that the victim is an operator of an Ohio transit system bus or 198
Ohio transit system rail car or a contracted employee providing 199
that service to an Ohio transit system, and if the victim is 200
engaged in the operation of an Ohio transit system bus or Ohio 201
transit system rail car, assault is one of the following: 202

(a) Except as otherwise provided in division (C) (10) (b) of 203
this section, assault committed in the specified circumstances 204
is a felony of the fifth degree. Notwithstanding the fine 205
specified in division (A) (3) of section 2929.18 of the Revised 206
Code for a felony of the fifth degree, if the court decides to 207
impose a fine under this division, the court may impose upon the 208
offender a fine of not more than five thousand dollars. 209
Additionally, the court may prohibit the offender from riding 210
any Ohio transit system bus or Ohio transit system rail car for 211
six months. 212

(b) If the offender previously has been convicted of or 213
pleaded guilty to one or more assault or homicide offenses 214
committed against an operator of an Ohio transit system bus or 215
Ohio transit system rail car or a contracted employee providing 216
that service to an Ohio transit system, assault committed in the 217
specified circumstances is a felony of the fourth degree. 218
Additionally, the court may prohibit the offender from riding 219
any Ohio transit system bus or Ohio transit system rail car for 220
the offender's lifetime. 221

(11) If an offender who is convicted of or pleads guilty 222
to assault when it is a misdemeanor also is convicted of or 223
pleads guilty to a specification as described in section 224
2941.1423 of the Revised Code that was included in the 225

indictment, count in the indictment, or information charging the 226
offense, the court shall sentence the offender to a mandatory 227
jail term as provided in division (F) of section 2929.24 of the 228
Revised Code. 229

If an offender who is convicted of or pleads guilty to 230
assault when it is a felony also is convicted of or pleads 231
guilty to a specification as described in section 2941.1423 of 232
the Revised Code that was included in the indictment, count in 233
the indictment, or information charging the offense, except as 234
otherwise provided in division (C) (6) of this section, the court 235
shall sentence the offender to a mandatory prison term as 236
provided in division (B) (8) of section 2929.14 of the Revised 237
Code. 238

(D) A prosecution for a violation of this section does not 239
preclude a prosecution of a violation of any other section of 240
the Revised Code. One or more acts, a series of acts, or a 241
course of behavior that can be prosecuted under this section or 242
any other section of the Revised Code may be prosecuted under 243
this section, the other section of the Revised Code, or both 244
sections. However, if an offender is convicted of or pleads 245
guilty to a violation of this section and also is convicted of 246
or pleads guilty to a violation of section 2903.22 of the 247
Revised Code based on the same conduct involving the same victim 248
that was the basis of the violation of this section, the two 249
offenses are allied offenses of similar import under section 250
2941.25 of the Revised Code. 251

(E) As used in this section: 252

(1) "Peace officer" has the same meaning as in section 253
2935.01 of the Revised Code. 254

(2) "Firefighter" means any person who is a firefighter as 255
defined in section 3937.41 of the Revised Code and, for purposes 256
of division (E) (21) of this section, also includes a member of a 257
fire department as defined in section 742.01 of the Revised 258
Code. 259

(3) "Emergency medical service" has the same meaning as in 260
section 4765.01 of the Revised Code. 261

(4) "Local correctional facility" means a county, 262
multicounty, municipal, municipal-county, or multicounty- 263
municipal jail or workhouse, a minimum security jail established 264
under section 341.23 or 753.21 of the Revised Code, or another 265
county, multicounty, municipal, municipal-county, or 266
multicounty-municipal facility used for the custody of persons 267
arrested for any crime or delinquent act, persons charged with 268
or convicted of any crime, or persons alleged to be or 269
adjudicated a delinquent child. 270

(5) "Employee of a local correctional facility" means a 271
person who is an employee of the political subdivision or of one 272
or more of the affiliated political subdivisions that operates 273
the local correctional facility and who operates or assists in 274
the operation of the facility. 275

(6) "School teacher or administrator" means either of the 276
following: 277

(a) A person who is employed in the public schools of the 278
state under a contract described in section 3311.77 or 3319.08 279
of the Revised Code in a position in which the person is 280
required to have a certificate issued pursuant to sections 281
3319.22 to 3319.311 of the Revised Code. 282

(b) A person who is employed by a nonpublic school for 283

which the director of education and workforce prescribes minimum 284
standards under section 3301.07 of the Revised Code and who is 285
certificated in accordance with section 3301.071 of the Revised 286
Code. 287

(7) "Community control sanction" has the same meaning as 288
in section 2929.01 of the Revised Code. 289

(8) "Escorted visit" means an escorted visit granted under 290
section 2967.27 of the Revised Code. 291

(9) "Post-release control" and "transitional control" have 292
the same meanings as in section 2967.01 of the Revised Code. 293

(10) "Investigator of the bureau of criminal 294
identification and investigation" has the same meaning as in 295
section 2903.11 of the Revised Code. 296

(11) "Health care professional" and "health care worker" 297
have the same meanings as in section 2305.234 of the Revised 298
Code. 299

(12) "Assault or homicide offense committed against 300
hospital personnel" means a violation of this section or of 301
section 2903.01, 2903.02, 2903.03, 2903.04, 2903.041, 2903.11, 302
2903.12, or 2903.14 of the Revised Code committed in 303
circumstances in which all of the following apply: 304

(a) The victim of the offense was a health care 305
professional of a hospital, a health care worker of a hospital, 306
or a security officer of a hospital. 307

(b) The offender knew or had reasonable cause to know that 308
the victim was a health care professional of a hospital, a 309
health care worker of a hospital, or a security officer of a 310
hospital. 311

(c) The victim was engaged in the performance of the 312
victim's duties. 313

(d) The hospital offered de-escalation or crisis 314
intervention training for such professionals, workers, or 315
officers. 316

(13) "De-escalation or crisis intervention training" means 317
de-escalation or crisis intervention training for health care 318
professionals of a hospital, health care workers of a hospital, 319
and security officers of a hospital to facilitate interaction 320
with patients, members of a patient's family, and visitors, 321
including those with mental impairments. 322

(14) "Assault or homicide offense committed against 323
justice system personnel" means a violation of this section or 324
of section 2903.01, 2903.02, 2903.03, 2903.04, 2903.041, 325
2903.11, 2903.12, or 2903.14 of the Revised Code committed in 326
circumstances in which the victim of the offense was a judge, 327
magistrate, prosecutor, or court official or employee whom the 328
offender knew or had reasonable cause to know was a judge, 329
magistrate, prosecutor, or court official or employee, and the 330
victim was engaged in the performance of the victim's duties. 331

(15) "Court official or employee" means any official or 332
employee of a court created under the constitution or statutes 333
of this state or of a United States court located in this state. 334

(16) "Judge" means a judge of a court created under the 335
constitution or statutes of this state or of a United States 336
court located in this state. 337

(17) "Magistrate" means an individual who is appointed by 338
a court of record of this state and who has the powers and may 339
perform the functions specified in Civil Rule 53, Criminal Rule 340

19, or Juvenile Rule 40, or an individual who is appointed by a 341
United States court located in this state who has similar powers 342
and functions. 343

(18) "Prosecutor" has the same meaning as in section 344
2935.01 of the Revised Code. 345

(19) (a) "Hospital" means, subject to division (E) (19) (b) 346
of this section, an institution classified as a hospital under 347
section 3701.01 of the Revised Code in which are provided to 348
patients diagnostic, medical, surgical, obstetrical, 349
psychiatric, or rehabilitation care or a hospital operated by a 350
health maintenance organization. 351

(b) "Hospital" does not include any of the following: 352

(i) A facility licensed under Chapter 3721. of the Revised 353
Code, a health care facility operated by the department of 354
mental health and addiction services or the department of 355
developmental disabilities, a health maintenance organization 356
that does not operate a hospital, or the office of any private, 357
licensed health care professional, whether organized for 358
individual or group practice; 359

(ii) An institution for the sick that is operated 360
exclusively for patients who use spiritual means for healing and 361
for whom the acceptance of medical care is inconsistent with 362
their religious beliefs, accredited by a national accrediting 363
organization, exempt from federal income taxation under section 364
501 of the "Internal Revenue Code of 1986," 100 Stat. 2085, 26 365
U.S.C. 1, as amended, and providing twenty-four-hour nursing 366
care pursuant to the exemption in division (E) of section 367
4723.32 of the Revised Code from the licensing requirements of 368
Chapter 4723. of the Revised Code. 369

(20) "Health maintenance organization" has the same 370
meaning as in section 3727.01 of the Revised Code. 371

(21) "Emergency service responder" means any law 372
enforcement officer, first responder, emergency medical 373
technician-basic, emergency medical technician-intermediate, 374
emergency medical technician-paramedic, firefighter, or 375
volunteer firefighter. 376

(22) "Family or household member" means any of the 377
following: 378

(a) Any of the following who is residing or has resided 379
with a person who is employed as an emergency service responder: 380

(i) A spouse, a person living as a spouse, or a former 381
spouse of a person who is employed as an emergency service 382
responder; 383

(ii) A parent, a foster parent, or a child of a person who 384
is employed as an emergency service responder, or another person 385
related by consanguinity or affinity to a person who is employed 386
as an emergency service responder; 387

(iii) A parent or a child of a spouse, person living as a 388
spouse, or former spouse of a person who is employed as an 389
emergency service responder, or another person related by 390
consanguinity or affinity to a spouse, person living as a 391
spouse, or former spouse of a person who is employed as an 392
emergency service responder. 393

(b) The natural parent of any child of whom a person who 394
is employed as an emergency service responder is the other 395
natural parent or is the putative other natural parent. 396

(23) "First responder," "emergency medical technician-" 397

basic," "emergency medical technician-intermediate," and 398
"emergency medical technician-paramedic" have the same meanings 399
as in section 4765.01 of the Revised Code. 400

(24) "Volunteer firefighter" has the same meaning as in 401
section 146.01 of the Revised Code. 402

(25) "Person living as a spouse" means a person who is 403
living or has lived with a person who is employed as an 404
emergency service responder in a common law marital 405
relationship, who otherwise is cohabiting with a person who is 406
employed as an emergency service responder, or who otherwise has 407
cohabited with a person who is employed as an emergency service 408
responder within five years prior to the date of the alleged 409
commission of the act in question. 410

(26) "Co-worker" means a person who is employed by the 411
organization or entity that is served by a person who is 412
employed as an emergency service responder. 413

(27) "Ohio transit system bus" means a motor vehicle of an 414
Ohio transit system that is designed for carrying more than nine 415
passengers and used for the transportation of persons but does 416
not mean any school bus. 417

(28) "Ohio transit system rail car" means a street rail 418
car, tramline car, subway car, monorail car, or rapid transit 419
car within a ground transportation system having as its primary 420
purpose the regularly scheduled mass movement of passengers 421
between locations within the territorial boundaries of an Ohio 422
transit system. 423

(29) "Ohio transit system" has the same meaning as in 424
section 2305.33 of the Revised Code. 425

(30) "Motor vehicle" has the same meaning as in section 426

4511.01 of the Revised Code. 427

(31) "Assault or homicide offense committed against an 428
operator of an Ohio transit system bus or Ohio transit system 429
rail car or a contracted employee providing that service to an 430
Ohio transit system" means a violation of this section or of 431
section 2903.01, 2903.02, 2903.03, 2903.04, 2903.041, 2903.11, 432
2903.12, or 2903.14 of the Revised Code committed in 433
circumstances in which all of the following apply: 434

(a) The victim of the offense was an operator of an Ohio 435
transit system bus or Ohio transit system rail car or a 436
contracted employee providing that service to an Ohio transit 437
system. 438

(b) The offender knew or had reasonable cause to know that 439
the victim was an operator of an Ohio transit system bus or Ohio 440
transit system rail car or a contracted employee providing that 441
service to an Ohio transit system. 442

(c) The victim was engaged in the operation of an Ohio 443
transit system bus or Ohio transit system rail car. 444

Sec. 2917.41. (A) No person shall evade the payment of the 445
known fares of a public transportation system. 446

(B) No person shall alter any transfer, pass, ticket, or 447
token of a public transportation system with the purpose of 448
evading the payment of fares or of defrauding the system. 449

(C) No person shall do any of the following while in any 450
facility or on any vehicle of a public transportation system: 451

(1) Play sound equipment without the proper use of a 452
private earphone; 453

(2) Smoke, eat, or drink in any area where the activity is 454

clearly marked as being prohibited; 455

(3) Expectorate upon a person, facility, or vehicle. 456

(D) No person shall write, deface, draw, or otherwise mark 457
on any facility or vehicle of a public transportation system. 458

(E) No person shall fail to comply with a lawful order of 459
a public transportation system police officer, and no person 460
shall resist, obstruct, or abuse a public transportation police 461
officer in the performance of the officer's duties. 462

(F) Whoever violates this section is guilty of misconduct 463
involving a public transportation system. 464

(1) ~~Violation~~ A violation of division (A), ~~(B), or (E)~~ of 465
this section is a misdemeanor of the ~~fourth~~ second degree. 466

(2) ~~Violation~~ A violation of division (B) or (E) of this 467
section is a misdemeanor of the fourth degree. 468

(3) A violation of division (C) of this section is a minor 469
misdemeanor on a first offense. If a person previously has been 470
convicted of or pleaded guilty to a violation of any division of 471
this section or of a municipal ordinance that is substantially 472
similar to any division of this section, violation of division 473
(C) of this section is a misdemeanor of the fourth degree. 474

~~(3) Violation~~ (4) A violation of division (D) of this 475
section is a misdemeanor of the third degree. 476

(G) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, seventy- 477
five per cent of each fine paid to satisfy a sentence imposed 478
for a violation of this section shall be deposited into the 479
treasury of the county in which the violation occurred and 480
twenty-five per cent shall be deposited with the county transit 481
board, regional transit authority, or regional transit 482

commission that operates the public transportation system 483
involved in the violation, unless the board of county 484
commissioners operates the public transportation system, in 485
which case one hundred per cent of each fine shall be deposited 486
into the treasury of the county. 487

(H) As used in this section, "public transportation 488
system" means a county transit system operated in accordance 489
with sections 306.01 to 306.13 of the Revised Code, a regional 490
transit authority operated in accordance with sections 306.30 to 491
306.71 of the Revised Code, or a regional transit commission 492
operated in accordance with sections 306.80 to 306.90 of the 493
Revised Code. 494

Section 2. That existing sections 2903.13 and 2917.41 of 495
the Revised Code are hereby repealed. 496