

The House Committee on Judiciary, Non-Civil offers the following substitute to SB 499:

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Article 4 of Chapter 11 of Title 16 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,
2 relating to dangerous instrumentalities and practices, so as to repeal the prohibition on
3 possessing a silencer; to provide for conforming changes; to provide for definitions; to
4 provide for related matters; to provide for an effective date and applicability; to repeal
5 conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

7 **SECTION 1.**

8 Article 4 of Chapter 11 of Title 16 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to
9 dangerous instrumentalities and practices, is amended in Part 2, relating to possession of
10 dangerous weapons, by repealing paragraph (7) of Code Section 16-11-121, relating to
11 definitions relative to possession of dangerous weapons.

12 **SECTION 2.**

13 Said article is further amended in said part by revising Code Section 16-11-122, relating to
14 possession of sawed-off shotgun or rifle, machine gun, silencer, or dangerous weapon
15 prohibited, as follows:

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16 "16-11-122.

17 No person shall have in his or her possession any sawed-off shotgun, sawed-off rifle,
18 machine gun, or dangerous weapon, ~~or silencer~~ except as provided in Code
19 Section 16-11-124."

20 **SECTION 3.**

21 Said article is further amended in said part by revising Code Section 16-11-123, relating to
22 unlawful possession of firearms or weapons, as follows:

23 "16-11-123.

24 (a) A person commits the offense of unlawful possession of firearms or weapons when he
25 or she knowingly has in his or her possession any sawed-off shotgun, sawed-off rifle,
26 machine gun, or dangerous weapon, ~~or silencer~~, and, upon conviction thereof, he or she
27 shall be punished by imprisonment for a period of five years.

28 (b) A person commits the offense of unlawful possession of a silencer when the person
29 possesses what he or she knows to be a silencer, as defined in Code Section 16-11-160, and
30 at the time of such possession, knows he or she is prohibited from possessing or receiving
31 a firearm under the laws of this state, and, upon conviction thereof, he or she shall be
32 punished for a felony."

33 **SECTION 4.**

34 Said article is further amended in said part by revising Code Section 16-11-124, relating to
35 exemptions from application of part, as follows:

36 "16-11-124.

37 This part shall not apply to:

38 (1) A peace officer of any duly authorized police agency of this state or of any political
39 subdivision thereof, or a law enforcement officer of any department or agency of the
40 United States who is regularly employed and paid by the United States, this state, or any

41 such political subdivision, or an employee of the Department of Corrections of this state
42 who is authorized in writing by the commissioner of corrections to transfer or possess
43 such firearms while in the official performance of his or her duties;

44 (2) A member of the National Guard or of the armed forces of the United States to wit:
45 the army, navy, marine corps, air force, space force, or coast guard who, while serving
46 therein, possesses such firearm in the line of duty;

47 (3) Any sawed-off shotgun, sawed-off rifle, machine gun, or dangerous weapon, ~~or~~
48 ~~silencer~~ which has been modified or changed to the extent that it is inoperative.
49 Examples of the requisite modification include weapons with their barrel or barrels filled
50 with lead, hand grenades filled with sand, or other nonexplosive materials;

51 (4) Possession of a sawed-off shotgun, sawed-off rifle, machine gun, or dangerous
52 weapon, ~~or silencer~~ by a person who is ~~authorized to possess~~ possesses the same ~~because~~
53 ~~he has registered the sawed-off shotgun, sawed-off rifle, machine gun, dangerous~~
54 ~~weapon, or silencer~~ in accordance with ~~the dictates of the National Firearms Act, 68A~~
55 ~~Stat. 725 (26 U.S.C. Sections 5841-5862)~~ federal law; and

56 (5) A security officer employed by a federally licensed nuclear power facility or a
57 licensee of such facility, including a contract security officer, who is trained and qualified
58 under a security plan approved by the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission or
59 other federal agency authorized to regulate nuclear facility security; provided, however,
60 that this exemption shall apply only while such security officer is acting in connection
61 with his or her official duties on the premises of such nuclear power facility or on
62 properties outside the facility property pursuant to a written agreement entered into with
63 the local law enforcement agency having jurisdiction over the facility. ~~The exemption~~
64 ~~under this paragraph does not include the possession of silencers."~~

65 **SECTION 5.**

66 Said article is further amended in Part 4A, relating to enhanced criminal penalties, by
 67 revising Code Section 16-11-160, relating to use of machine guns, sawed-off rifles,
 68 sawed-off shotguns, or firearms with silencers during commission of certain offenses and
 69 enhanced criminal penalties, as follows:

70 "16-11-160.

71 (a)(~~1~~) As used in this Code section, the term:

72 (1) 'Bulletproof vest' means a bullet-resistant soft body armor providing, as a minimum
 73 standard, the level of protection known as 'threat level I,' which means at least seven
 74 layers of bullet-resistant material providing protection from at least three shots of
 75 158-grain lead ammunition fired from a .38 caliber handgun at a velocity of 850 feet per
 76 second.

77 (2) 'Machine gun' shall have the same meaning as set forth in Code Section 16-11-121.

78 (3) 'Sawed-off rifle' shall have the same meaning as set forth in Code Section 16-11-121.

79 (4) 'Sawed-off shotgun' shall have the same meaning as set forth in Code
 80 Section 16-11-121.

81 (5) 'Silencer or suppressor' means any device for diminishing the report of any portable
 82 weapon or other device from which a shot, bullet, or projectile may be discharged by an
 83 explosive.

84 (b) It shall be unlawful for any person to possess or to use a machine gun, sawed-off rifle,
 85 sawed-off shotgun, or firearm equipped with a silencer ~~or suppressor~~, as those terms are
 86 defined in Code Section 16-11-121, during the commission or the attempted commission
 87 of any of the following offenses:

88 (1)(~~A~~) Aggravated assault as defined in Code Section 16-5-21;

89 (2)(~~B~~) Aggravated battery as defined in Code Section 16-5-24;

90 (3)(~~C~~) Robbery as defined in Code Section 16-8-40;

91 (4)(~~D~~) Armed robbery as defined in Code Section 16-8-41;

- 92 ~~(5)(D.1)~~ Home invasion in any degree as defined in Code Section 16-7-5;
- 93 ~~(6)(E)~~ Murder or felony murder as defined in Code Section 16-5-1;
- 94 ~~(7)(F)~~ Voluntary manslaughter as defined in Code Section 16-5-2;
- 95 ~~(8)(G)~~ Involuntary manslaughter as defined in Code Section 16-5-3;
- 96 ~~(9)(H)~~ Sale, possession for sale, transportation, manufacture, offer for sale, or offer to
 97 manufacture controlled substances in violation of any provision of Article 2 of
 98 Chapter 13 of this title, the 'Georgia Controlled Substances Act';
- 99 ~~(10)(I)~~ Terroristic threats or acts as defined in Code Section 16-11-37;
- 100 ~~(11)(J)~~ Arson as defined in Code Section 16-7-60, 16-7-60.1, 16-7-61, or 16-7-62 or
 101 arson of lands as defined in Code Section 16-7-63;
- 102 ~~(12)(K)~~ Influencing witnesses as defined in Code Section 16-10-93; and
- 103 ~~(13)(L)~~ Participation in criminal gang activity as defined in Code Section 16-15-4.
- 104 ~~(2)(A) As used in this paragraph, the term 'bulletproof vest' means a bullet-resistant~~
 105 ~~soft body armor providing, as a minimum standard, the level of protection known as~~
 106 ~~'threat level I,' which means at least seven layers of bullet-resistant material providing~~
 107 ~~protection from at least three shots of 158-grain lead ammunition fired from a .38~~
 108 ~~caliber handgun at a velocity of 850 feet per second.~~
- 109 ~~(c)(B)~~ It shall be unlawful for any person to wear a bulletproof vest during the commission
 110 or the attempted commission of any of the following offenses:
- 111 ~~(1)(i)~~ Any crime against or involving the person of another in violation of any of the
 112 provisions of this title for which a sentence of life imprisonment may be imposed;
- 113 ~~(2)(ii)~~ Any felony involving the manufacture, delivery, distribution, administering, or
 114 selling of controlled substances or marijuana as provided in Code Section 16-13-30; or
- 115 ~~(3)(iii)~~ Trafficking of substances in violation of Code Section 16-13-31.
- 116 ~~(d)(b)~~ Any person who violates ~~paragraph (1) of subsection (a)(b)~~ of this Code section
 117 shall be guilty of a felony, and, upon conviction thereof, shall be punished by confinement

118 for a period of ten years; and such sentence ~~to~~ shall run consecutively to any other sentence
119 which the person has received.

120 (e) Any person who violates ~~paragraph (2)~~ of subsection ~~(a)~~(c) of this Code section shall
121 be guilty of a felony, and, upon conviction thereof, shall be punished by confinement for
122 a period of one to five years; and such sentence ~~to~~ shall run consecutively to any other
123 sentence which the person has received.

124 (f)~~(e)~~ Upon the second or subsequent conviction of a person under this Code section, the
125 person shall be punished by life imprisonment. Notwithstanding any other law to the
126 contrary, the sentence of any person which is imposed for violating this Code section a
127 second or subsequent time shall not be suspended by a court or a probationary sentence
128 imposed in lieu thereof.

129 (g)~~(d)~~ The punishment prescribed for the violation of subsections ~~(a)~~ and (b), (c), and (f)
130 of this Code section shall not be probated or suspended as ~~is~~ provided by Code
131 Section 17-10-7.

132 (h)~~(e)~~ Any crime committed in violation of this Code section shall be considered a separate
133 offense."

134 **SECTION 6.**

135 This Act shall become effective on July 1, 2026, and shall apply to all offenses committed
136 on or after such date.

137 **SECTION 7.**

138 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.