

2020 -- H 7731

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2020

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A N A C T

RELATING TO CRIMINAL OFFENSES -- DISORDERLY CONDUCT - PROTECTIVE  
EQUIPMENT AND DISGUISED MASKS PROHIBITED

Introduced By: Representatives Corvese, Noret, Jacquard, Lima, and Hawkins

Date Introduced: February 26, 2020

Referred To: House Judiciary

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1           SECTION 1. Chapter 11-11 of the General Laws entitled "Disorderly Conduct" is hereby  
2 amended by adding thereto the following section:

3           **11-11-8. Protective equipment and masks prohibited.**

4           (a) It shall be unlawful for any person to carry, possess or wear any of the following  
5 devices during parades, demonstrations, rallies and assemblies:

6           (1) A gas mask or similar device designed to filter all air that a person inhales and that  
7 would protect the respiratory tract against chemical irritants commonly deployed by law  
8 enforcement;

9           (2) Any protective clothing or equipment, designed in whole or in part to minimize the  
10 risk of injury from deadly weapons, including, but not limited to: riot helmets, face visors, body  
11 armor, vests, neck protection, knee pads, riot shields and any other apparel or equipment worn for  
12 the purpose of defeating law enforcement tactics to control crowds;

13           (3) A mask or disguise with the specific intent to intimidate or threaten another person.

14           (b) It shall be unlawful for any person who is engaged in conduct prohibited by law, to  
15 wear a mask, hood, makeup, robe, helmet, disguises, or of any type of facial alteration, with the  
16 intent of avoiding their identification.

17           (c) Anyone who violates this section shall be imprisoned for not more than one year or  
18 shall be fined one thousand dollars (\$1,000), or both.

1            (d) The provisions of subsection (a) of this section shall not apply to any federal, state or  
2 municipal law enforcement officer performing their official duties.

3            SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF

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1           This act would make it a misdemeanor for persons to carry, possess, or wear masks or  
2 protective clothing or equipment designed to minimize the risk of injury from deadly weapons,  
3 for the purposes of hindering law enforcement crowd control actions. It would also outlaw  
4 persons who are engaged in the conduct prohibited by law, from wearing disguises with the intent  
5 of avoiding their identification.

6           This act would take effect upon passage.

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