

SB 538 – Traveling Across County Lines to Commit Criminal Offenses (Identical HB 531)

This bill amends s. 843.22, F.S., deleting burglary and adding the following (new language in bold): “if a person who commits a **grand theft or a forcible felony, as defined in s. 776.08, F.S.**, travels any distance with the intent to commit the **offense** in a county in this state other than the person’s county of residence, the degree of the **offense** shall be reclassified to the next higher degree.” Therefore, by including grand theft and forcible felonies, which also include burglary, more offenders could be subject to being reclassified and ranked one level above their specified ranking under the Criminal Punishment Code when traveling across county lines is involved.

Per FDLE, there have been 121 arrests since 2022 when the offense was elevated for traveling any distance with the intent to commit the burglary in a county in this state other than the person’s county of residence, with one guilty/convicted charge under s. 843.22, F.S. Per DOC, in FY 22-23, there were 1,090 new commitments to prison for grand theft offenses and 8,759 new commitments for forcible felonies listed under s. 776.08, F.S. It is not known how many offenders would be impacted by this change in language.

CONFERENCE ADOPTED ESTIMATE: Positive Significant

Requested by: Senate & House