STATE OF NEW YORK

196

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

(Prefiled)

January 8, 2025

Introduced by M. of A. BERGER, HEVESI, BICHOTTE HERMELYN, EICHENSTEIN, BRAUNSTEIN, DINOWITZ, PHEFFER AMATO, WILLIAMS, EACHUS, CUNNINGHAM, STIRPE, JONES, COLTON, PAULIN, SANTABARBARA, STERN, ROZIC, SHIMSKY, ANGELINO, BENEDETTO, BUTTENSCHON, RIVERA, FALL, BLUMENCRANZ -- read once and referred to the Committee on Codes

AN ACT to amend the penal law, in relation to establishing the crime of disruption or disturbance of a lawful assembly

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as the "dialogue and decorum act".

§ 2. The penal law is amended by adding a new section 240.22 to read as follows:

§ 240.22 Disruption or disturbance of a lawful assembly.

1. A person is guilty of disruption or disturbance of a lawful assembly when such person, without authority of law, willfully disturbs or breaks up any assembly or meeting that is not unlawful in its character.

2. For purposes of this section, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

(a) "Willfully disturbs" shall mean:

(i) the conduct substantially impairs the ability to conduct a lawful meeting or assembly; and

(ii) the conduct is in violation of the implicit customs or usage of the specific kind of meeting or assembly, or the explicit rules governing the meeting or assembly, where the disrupting party knew or reasonably should have known such conduct was in violation.

(b) "Lawful assembly" shall mean a group of two or more individuals who legally reserve a space or area with an institution or other space lawfully available to those conducting such assembly or meeting, and who

EXPLANATION--Matter in *italics* (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [-] is old law to be omitted.

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use such space or area to peacefully assemble for any purpose not expressly prohibited by law.

3. Disregard of a moderator's call to order or a determination that a person is in violation of the rules of an assembly or meeting shall be proof that a disruption is willful.

4. Nothing contained in this section shall be construed to prohibit:

(i) persons from articulating a particular viewpoint at an assembly or meeting that is not unlawful in its character; or

(ii) non-disruptive protests of a lawful assembly or meeting;

Disruption or disturbance of a lawful assembly is an unclassified misdemeanor punishable by a fine of not less than two hundred fifty dollars nor more than five hundred dollars.

§ 3. This act shall take effect immediately.