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State of Minnesota

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NINETIETH SESSION

H. F. No. 55

01/05/2017 Authored by Lohmer, Fenton, Zerwas, Rarick, Miller and others
The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Transportation and Regional Governance Policy

1.1 A bill for an act
1.2 relating to public safety; increasing penalties for obstructing a highway; amending
1.3 Minnesota Statutes 2016, sections 160.2715; 609.74.

1.4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

1.5 Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 2016, section 160.2715, is amended to read:

1.6 160.2715 RIGHT-OF-WAY USE; MISDEMEANORS PENALTIES.

1.7 (a) Except for the actions of the road authorities, their agents, employees, contractors,
1.8 and utilities in carrying out their duties imposed by law or contract, and except as herein
1.9 provided in paragraph (b), it shall be unlawful is a misdemeanor to:

1.10 (1) obstruct any highway or deposit snow or ice thereon;

1.11 (2) plow or perform any other detrimental operation within the road right-of-way except
1.12 in the preparation of the land for planting permanent vegetative cover or as authorized under
1.13 section 160.232;

1.14 (3) erect a fence on the right-of-way of a trunk highway, county state-aid highway,
1.15 county highway, or town road, except to erect a lane fence to the ends of a livestock pass;

1.16 (4) erect or reconstruct driveway headwalls in or on the right-of-way of a highway or
1.17 road, except as may be allowed by permit from the road authority imposing reasonable
1.18 regulations as are necessary to prevent interference with the construction, maintenance, and
1.19 safe use of the highway or road and its appurtenances;

1.20 (5) dig any holes in any highway, except to locate markers placed to identify sectional
1.21 corner positions and private boundary corners;

- 2.1 (6) remove any earth, gravel, or rock from any highway;
- 2.2 (7) obstruct any ditch draining any highway or drain any noisome materials into any
2.3 ditch;
- 2.4 (8) place or maintain any building or structure within the limits of any highway;
- 2.5 (9) place or maintain any advertisement within the limits of any highway, except as
2.6 provided in section 160.27, subdivision 7;
- 2.7 (10) paint, print, place, or affix any advertisement or any object within the limits of any
2.8 highway, except as provided in section 160.27, subdivision 7;
- 2.9 (11) deface, mar, damage, or tamper with any structure, work, material, equipment,
2.10 tools, signs, markers, signals, paving, guardrails, drains, or any other highway appurtenance
2.11 on or along any highway;
- 2.12 (12) remove, injure, displace, or destroy right-of-way markers, or reference or witness
2.13 monuments, or markers placed to preserve section or quarter-section corners;
- 2.14 (13) improperly place or fail to place warning signs and detour signs as provided by
2.15 law;
- 2.16 (14) drive over, through, or around any barricade, fence, or obstruction erected for the
2.17 purpose of preventing traffic from passing over a portion of a highway closed to public
2.18 travel or to remove, deface, or damage any such barricade, fence, or obstruction.

2.19 (b) ~~Any violation of this section~~ Except for the actions of the road authorities, their
2.20 agents, employees, contractors, and utilities in carrying out their duties imposed by law or
2.21 contract, it is a gross misdemeanor to intentionally obstruct traffic entering, exiting, or on
2.22 a trunk highway.

2.23 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective August 1, 2017, and applies to crimes
2.24 committed on or after that date.

2.25 Sec. 2. Minnesota Statutes 2016, section 609.74, is amended to read:

2.26 **609.74 PUBLIC NUISANCE.**

2.27 (a) Whoever by an act or failure to perform a legal duty intentionally does any of the
2.28 following is guilty of maintaining a public nuisance, ~~which is a misdemeanor~~ and may be
2.29 sentenced as provided in paragraph (b):

3.1 (1) maintains or permits a condition which unreasonably annoys, injures or endangers
3.2 the safety, health, morals, comfort, or repose of any considerable number of members of
3.3 the public; or

3.4 (2) interferes with, obstructs, or renders dangerous for passage, any public highway or
3.5 right-of-way, or waters used by the public; or

3.6 (3) is guilty of any other act or omission declared by law to be a public nuisance and for
3.7 which no sentence is specifically provided.

3.8 (b)(1) A person who violates paragraph (a), clause (1) or (3), is guilty of a misdemeanor.

3.9 (2) A person who violates paragraph (a), clause (2), is guilty of a gross misdemeanor.

3.10 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective August 1, 2017, and applies to crimes
3.11 committed on or after that date.