



HOUSE BILL 686: Freedom to Celebrate the Fourth of July.

2019-2020 General Assembly

Committee:		Date:	November 8, 2020
Introduced by:	Rep. Stevens	Prepared by:	Jennifer H. Bedford
Analysis of:	Ratified		Staff Attorney

OVERVIEW: *House Bill 686 would have allowed 4th of July parades and regulated firework displays. House Bill 686 was ratified by the General Assembly on June 24, 2020, and vetoed by the Governor on July 2, 2020.*

CURRENT LAW: Executive Order 141 prohibited outdoor mass gatherings for more than 25 people, including parades. The Order was set to expire June 26, 2020, but it could have been extended or replaced with a similar Order.

BILL ANALYSIS:

Section 1 would have prohibited an Executive Order or declaration prohibiting parades or firework displays done in accordance with the pyrotechnics' laws, to be held on the 4th of July.

Section 2 would have prohibited municipalities or counties from prohibiting a parade, or a firework display done in accordance with the pyrotechnics' laws, to be held on the 4th of July. This section would also have barred a municipality or county from denying or revoking a reasonable permit for a parade or firework display. If a substantially similar permit had been granted in 2019, the 2020 permit could have been revoked or denied but the municipality or county's governing board would have had to document a finding of good cause for the revocation or denial.

Section 3 would have protected a person from prosecution for the Class 2 misdemeanor of violating an Executive Order or local declaration, for attending or participating in a parade or firework display on the 4th of July.

Section 4 would have limited civil liability regarding the contraction of COVID-19 at a parade or a firework display done in accordance with the pyrotechnics' laws, to be held on the 4th of July.

EFFECTIVE DATE: House Bill 686 was ratified by the General Assembly on June 24, 2020, and vetoed by the Governor on July 2, 2020.

Jeffrey Hudson
Director

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Legislative Analysis
Division
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