

HB 929 -- Sexual Offenses

Sponsor: Bivins

This bill increases the age of the victim as an element of the offense in several sex crimes.

Under current law, statutory rape in the first degree is committed when a person has sexual intercourse with another person who is 13 years old or younger. The bill increases this age to 15 or younger. The penalty for statutory rape is life imprisonment with a minimum of five years, but the minimum sentence is 10 years when the victim is 11 or younger. The bill changes this age to 13 or younger. The bill makes the same changes regarding the age of the victim for the crime of statutory sodomy in the first degree.

The bill also increases the age of the victim, from 13 to 15, as an element of the offense for child molestation in the first degree and sexual misconduct involving a child. Under current law, the crime of sexual abuse is a class C felony, but is a class B felony when the victim is age 13 or younger. The bill increases that age to 15 or younger.

Also under current law, evidence of a prior sexual offense involving a victim who is age 13 or younger is admissible in the prosecution of another such offense, for the purpose of showing the defendant's propensity to commit these crimes. The bill increases the relevant age to 15 or younger.