

Subject: Legislative History of R.S. 2A: 170-9

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1. Present wording:

" Any person who, by word, act or other means, willfully and maliciously gives or causes to be given a false fire alarm or false police alarm, is a disorderly person."

2. Source: R.S. 2: 202-13. There is a slight difference in wording and application between R.S. 2A:170-9 and the earlier R.S. 2:202-13; however, there is no change in the basic intent and effect of the law, and there are no revisor's notes or comments.

3. Earlier sources:

The earliest record of a " false fire alarm" statute is L. 1902, c. 127. This law was introduced by Mr. Horner as A-144, and read as follows:

" Any person who shall willfully or maliciously ring or cause to be rung any bell or alarm of any fire company in any township of this state, and thereby give or cause to be given a false alarm of fire, shall be deemed and adjudged to be a disorderly person."

The act was a supplement to an act entitled " an act concerning disorderly persons-- the revision of 1898. (L. 1898, c.239)

The act was amended in 1910 (L.1910, c. 23) by A-73, introduced by Mr. Moore. The amendedment broadened the scope of the bill to include any city or other municipality in the state.

The act was further amended in 1944(L. 1944, c. 11) by S-6, introduced by Mr. Eastwood. The 1944 amendment reads as follows:

" 1. Section 2:202-13 of the Revised Statutes is amended to read as follows:

2:202-13. Any person who shall willfully and maliciously ring, or cause to be rung, any bell or alarm of any fire company in any municipality of this State, and thereby give or cause to be given a false alarm of fire by telephone or by any other method or means, shall be adjudged a disorderly person."

There were no statements on any of the bills, nor were there any press clippings or other material on file in the Library. I did not find any mention of the subject matter of the bills in the 1902, 1910, or 1944 issues of the New Jersey Law Journal.

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