

**House File 237 - Introduced**

HOUSE FILE 237

BY SHIPLEY

**A BILL FOR**

1 An Act relating to tampering with witnesses or jurors, and  
2 providing penalties.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

1 Section 1. Section 720.4, Code 2023, is amended to read as  
2 follows:

3 **720.4 Tampering with witnesses or jurors.**

4 A person who offers any bribe to any person who the offeror  
5 believes has been or may be summoned as a witness or juror in  
6 any judicial or arbitration proceeding, or any legislative  
7 hearing, or who makes any threats toward such person or who  
8 forcibly or fraudulently detains or restrains such person, with  
9 the intent to improperly influence such witness or juror with  
10 respect to the witness' or juror's testimony or decision in  
11 such case, or to prevent such person from testifying or serving  
12 in such case, or who, in retaliation for anything lawfully done  
13 by any witness or juror in any case, harasses such witness or  
14 juror, commits ~~an aggravated misdemeanor~~ a class "C" felony.

15 EXPLANATION

16 The inclusion of this explanation does not constitute agreement with  
17 the explanation's substance by the members of the general assembly.

18 This bill relates to tampering with witnesses or jurors.

19 Current law provides that a person who offers a bribe,  
20 makes threats, or improperly detains or restrains another  
21 person who the person believes has been or will be summoned as  
22 a witness or juror in any judicial or arbitration proceeding  
23 or legislative hearing for the purpose of influencing or  
24 preventing the other person's testimony or preventing the  
25 other person from serving as a juror on the case, commits an  
26 aggravated misdemeanor. The bill increases the penalty for  
27 tampering with a witness or juror to a class "C" felony.

28 An aggravated misdemeanor is punishable by confinement for  
29 no more than two years and a fine of at least \$855 but not more  
30 than \$8,540. A class "C" felony is punishable by confinement  
31 for no more than 10 years and a fine of at least \$1,370 but not  
32 more than \$13,660.