Urgent Action Alert!

We are calling on all of you to take a few minutes to contact your Oklahoma State Senator to ask her/him to “Vote NO on HB2095.” This bill may be heard as early as 9:30am Monday morning.

What is HB2095?

HB2095 (Rep. Lepak and Sen. Daniels) seeks to radically punish and limit peaceful protest by adding the term “unlawful assembly” to a long-standing criminal statute known as “racketeering.” Adding “unlawful assembly” to the RICO act intends to criminalize people who are at a peaceful protest if three or more people are unlawful there (which makes it a “riot”) and if anyone assembled there fails to disperse when ordered to.

Talking Points:

- The Oklahoma RICO (Racketeer-Influenced and Corrupt Organizations) law was written to combat organized crime, or crime connected to an enterprise like the Mafia. These crimes include extortion, kidnapping, murder, drug trafficking and human trafficking. HB2095 will add “unlawful assembly” and remaining at the scene of a “riot” to this list of organized criminal activity and the people at the protest would be subject to the same harsh penalties designated by the RICO act.

- The term “riot” in Oklahoma means any gathering where three or more people are violent or threaten violence. So a peaceful protest could legally turn into a riot if a few people throw water bottles or even threaten to. If HB2095 passes, everyone at this “unlawful assembly” could be criminalized with the high fines and prison terms designated by the RICO act.

- But what if you didn’t hear the order to disperse? What if it is crowded and you can’t get out in time? There is nothing in this bill that addresses these issues.

- HB2095 will hamper Oklahomans’ right to protest and seeks to criminalize our constitutional right to freedom of assembly. Racketeering was never intended for peaceful protests or for citizens engaged in public assemblies. This bill is an extreme legal overreach.

Please contact your Senator and ask her/him to “Vote NO on HB2095.”

We have shared contact lists for all state Senators on our website: https://www.sierraclub.org/oklahoma/legislative

If you do not know who your Senator is, please use the “Find My Legislator” tool found here: http://www.oklegislature.gov/

After you have contacted your own Senator, if you have time to contact other Senators you can use our annual “Oklahoma Environmental Legislative Scorecards” to find legislators who may be more willing to listen to your requests as A, B, or C environmental voters:
For more information about all of our priority bills, please go to the legislative link of the Oklahoma Sierra Club Website: https://www.sierraclub.org/oklahoma/legislative

Also-- please JOIN US for our weekly Monday legislative Zoom chat where we talk about action alerts for the week, discuss how things are going with our advocacy, and occasionally we even carry out some lobby tasks together in real-time. We hope to see you there! Just click on the following link, and you can join us any time from 12:30pm to 2:30pm on Mondays-- for some or all of the meeting, it is up to you!

https://sierraclub.zoom.us/j/99293167038?pwd=YnZZNE83aTBFQ1lpSzdman15ckF2Zz09

Thank you for taking quick action on these important bills!