

# Why “Andy’s Law” is needed in Florida



## Florida State Rep. Mike Hill (R-Dist. 2)

Just before the Florida legislative session ended on Friday, March 11th, 2016 Rep. Ritch Workman, House Rules Chairman, shelved a special call for a floor vote on HB3/SB996, informally known as “Andy’s Law.” This despite broad support for the important counterterrorism measure as evidenced in unanimous passage in the Florida Senate and virtually unopposed passage at three committee hearings in the House. Let’s review why Andy’s Law was developed and enacted into law in several other states. Further, as shown in other instances such as the three year effort that eventually resulted in the passage of the Florida version of American Law for American Courts (ALAC), Foreign Laws in specific instances, these legislative speed bumps have occurred. Yet perseverance and effective advocates in the State Legislature like Rep. Mike Hill and others eventually overcame objections resulting in enactment of important counter terrorism laws.

The American Public Policy Alliance as living legacy created “Andy’s Law” a model state law: Terrorism as Racketeering and State Felony (TRSF). TRSF subjects enablers of home grown terrorism in the US to civil litigation under state RICO statutes. It was first introduced in the Arkansas legislature advocated by Daris Long, the father of the late Army Pvt. Andrew Long. Andy’s law was enacted into Arkansas law following passage in the 2013 Legislative Session in Little Rock.

Pvt. William “Andy” Long of Conway was killed and Pvt. Quinton Ezeagwula of Jacksonville was injured in a June 1, 2009,

shooting at the Little Rock Army-Navy Career Center. [Carlos Bledsoe also known as] Abdulhakim Muhammad was sentenced to life in prison for the shootings, which he said were in retaliation for U.S. policy in the Middle East. Under pressure from Congress the Pentagon relented and on April 15, 2015 awarded Purple Hearts to the late Pvt. William "Andy" Long and Quinton Ezeagwula. This was the first homegrown terrorist incident following 9/11, occurring several months before the Fort hood massacre by Army Major Nidal Hassan that killed 13, wounding 31 others. These purple hearts awarded to Long and Ezeagwula were delayed because the Pentagon and the Obama Justice Department considered the case of the Little Rock attack a criminal act, subject to state law or the Fort Hood jihad as non-combat casualties rather than terrorist actions.

Charles Jacobs of Americans for Peace and Tolerance conducted an investigation ultimately producing a documentary, [\*Losing our Sons\*](#) about the dynamics behind this tragedy.

Florida HB3/SB996 was an important counterterrorism law that had broad support in both the State Senate and at every stop in the three House Committee hearings the measure was assigned, passing unanimously. So why should such a vitally important measure fail to be called up for a floor vote on March 9<sup>th</sup>? Was it behind scenes efforts to kill it by Muslim Brotherhood affiliates in the sunshine state as some allege or was it the usual speed bumps in the legislative process?

Note this [post](#) in the Florida Tea Party Forum on the day the bill failed to be called up:

**Andy's Law was introduced in the Florida legislature this session by Rep. Mike Hill and Senator Joe Negron as HB3/SB996.**

**The bill passed three committees of the Senate without opposition. It passed two subcommittees and a committee of the House without opposition. On the Senate side the bill passed a floor vote 35-0.**

**The only hope for passage in 2016 is to have the rules suspended and have the bill sent to the floor for a vote.**

Chris Holton in a *Terror Trends Tribune* [article](#) wrote:

State legislation known as “Andy’s Law” stiffens criminal penalties for terrorism and material support for terrorism.

It is needed on the state level because our bureaucratized counterterrorism apparatus on the federal level is routinely reluctant to bring terrorism charges in cases that are clearly terrorism. The law also creates a civil cause of action empowering victims of terrorism to sue in state court those who provide material support and aid those who commit acts of terrorism. Andy’s Law has already passed into law in Louisiana, Arkansas, Kansas, North Carolina and Tennessee.

[...]

The only known opponents of Andy’s Law are Muslim Brotherhood groups, as identified in the largest terrorism financing prosecution in U.S. history, the U.S. v. the Holy Land Foundation.

In that trial, groups such as the Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR), the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA), the North American Islamic Trust (NAIT) and others were named as Muslim Brotherhood fronts and unindicted co-conspirators in that prosecution.

All of these well-funded groups and their allies are active in Florida. They are the only known opponents of Andy’s Law. This raises serious questions about the political terrain in the Sunshine State to say the least when a prominent Republican leader would unilaterally kill a popular counterterrorism measure opposed by nefarious elements of the Muslim Brotherhood.

Were there any precedents for the failure to pass Andy's Law in Florida? On the first try to pass ALAC in the 2012 legislative session here's what we wrote in an [\*NER/Iconoclast\* post](#):

The ALAC legislation (SB1360) died because Florida Senate President Mike Haridopolos didn't call up the bill, although calendared for action, because he wanted his pet legislation passed before he left office; and,

As evidenced by the overwhelming House passage of the ALAC legislation (HB 1209) by a vote of 92 to 24, and all the hurdles passed by the Senate version of ALAC (SB1360) the measure would have been adopted if it had not been for the actions of Senate President Haridopolos.

In the 2013 second try to get ALAC passed, we [reported](#):

The minority Democrats effectively killed the Florida version of American Law for American Courts on its third try in as many years in the final days of the 2013 Legislature in Tallahassee. SB58, Acceptance of Foreign Law in Certain Cases, was defeated on a procedural vote by the minority Senate Democrats: 25 Republicans to 14 Democrats. 27 votes were required to reach the required two-thirds margin to use the House version which passed the Florida House on April 18th, 79 Republicans to 39 Democrats. One Republican Senator Ms. Nancy Detert from Venice was absent from the floor for the vote while a Democrat who originally supported the vote requested release from a promise to vote for the House version after enormous pressure was brought on the Senator by the Democrat caucus. That fractious activity was witnessed by the House sponsor of HB351, Rep. Larry Metz. Consideration of the House ALAC version in the Florida Senate lost by two critical votes.

It was left to the 2014 Session to pass a modified version of

ALAC that Florida Governor Scott signed into law despite opposition from CAIR, Muslim Advocacy group Emerge, the ACLU, ADL and the International Law section of the Florida Bar association.

[Rep. Mike Hill](#) (R-House District 2) who sponsored HB3 Andy's Laws represents a North West Florida district. Hill served as vice chair of the House Civil Justice Subcommittee during the 2013 session. He is a graduate of the US Air Force Academy who served 10 years achieving the rank of Captain. He holds an MBA from the University of West Florida and is a State Farm insurance agent. Hill was past President of Northwest Florida Tea Party until his special election in 2013 to fill the final year of a vacant post. He was unanimously re-elected without opposition in his current House district in 2014. Hill was an important stalwart supporter of the Florida version of American Laws for American Courts that was passed and enacted into law in the 2014 session after two previous efforts in 2012 and 2013. In our conversation with him, he drew attention to several compelling reasons why Andy's Law should be passed in the next legislative session:

It has become apparent that terrorist attacks have increased significantly on our home soil. The vast majority of these attacks, if not all, have been committed by Muslims who want to bring their ideology to America in a violent way. HB 3 gives victims of these terrorist attacks recourse other than just remaining a victim. The bill will allow victims of terrorist attacks to seek civil remedies against those who perpetrated the attack AND against those who funded the attack, up to three times the damages suffered. Now victims will no longer remain silent sufferers, but crusaders for justice.

You can be sure that Mike Hill and those other Florida Senators and House members who sponsored and voted Andy's Law in the 2016 session in Tallahassee will be back in action in 2017 seeking passage and hopefully enactment.