

SCS SB 23 & 51 -- CRIMINAL OFFENSES IN ENTERTAINMENT

SPONSOR: Griesheimer (Threlkeld)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass" by the Committee on Crime Prevention and Public Safety by a vote of 12 to 0.

This substitute makes it a class A misdemeanor to operate a video camera within a motion picture theater without the consent of the theater owner. A second or subsequent offense is a class D felony. The owner of the movie theater is exempt from civil liability for detaining a person suspected of the offense, as long as the detention is reasonable.

The crime of illegal copying and distribution of sound recordings is changed by lowering the threshold for a felony from 1,000 illegal copies to 100 illegal copies.

The substitute also expands the crime of theft of cable television service to include when a person knowingly attempts to tamper with any cable television equipment which results in the disruption or unauthorized use of a cable television system.

FISCAL NOTE: Estimated Cost on General Revenue Fund of Less than \$100,000 in FY 2006, FY 2007, and FY 2008. No impact on Other State Funds in FY 2006, FY 2007, and FY 2008.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that the pirating of films and compact discs harms not only the artist financially, but also the distributor, movie theaters, and retailers of films and videos. It also harms the purchaser, who buys counterfeit products, and the artist's reputation when consumers see and listen to inferior pirated recordings.

Testifying for the bill were Senator Griesheimer; and Motion Picture Association of America.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

Richard Smreker, Senior Legislative Analyst