

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

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REPRESENTATIVE STEVE THOMPSON DISTRICT 3

Sponsor Statement

HB 105 "An Act relating to theft and property offenses; and providing for an effective date."

(28-LS0451\A)

The purpose of House Bill 105 is to raise the threshold amounts that distinguish felony theft from misdemeanor theft, and to further distinguish a Class A misdemeanor theft from a Class B misdemeanor theft.

The current cash value for the crime of theft found in AS 11.46, *Offenses Against Property*, were adopted in 1978. To put this into perspective, in 1978, milk was \$1.71 a gallon, a dozen eggs cost \$0.82 and a gallon of gas cost \$0.63. "Valuation updates" in law for theft and property crimes are common throughout the United States. Alaska should be no different.

Under today's law, a 19-year old adult charged with stealing a bicycle, valued at \$500 or more, faces Class C felony charges. Upon conviction, this young adult will go through life as a felon. A felony conviction on a person's record may have lifetime effects, damaging the person's ability to secure employment, to integrate into society, and affecting their rights as a citizen.

Make no mistake; with the passage of HB 105 guilty defendants will still face justice. In addition to incarceration, the court, at sentencing may still require restitution and fines. Courts can still aggressively sentence defendants to the fullest extent of the law.

Please join Representative Thompson in supporting this legislation.

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