

LEGAL SERVICES

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MEMORANDUM

April 6, 2010

SUBJECT: Sectional summary of CSSB 292(JUD) relating to pawnbrokers
(Work Order No. 26-LS1487\W)

TO: Senator Charlie Huggins
Attn: Josh Tempel

FROM: 
Theresa Bannister
Legislative Counsel

You have requested a sectional summary of the above-described bill. As a preliminary matter, note that a sectional summary of a bill should not be considered an authoritative interpretation of the bill and the bill itself is the best statement of its contents.

Section 1. Amends a small loans provision to define a "pawnbroker" to be a person regulated under the new article.

Section 2. Adds the regulation of pawnbrokers under the new provisions to the list of subjects to which the chapter on centralized licensing applies.

Section 3. Removes persons regulated by the new provisions from a statute that currently regulates persons who buy, sell, and loan money on secondhand articles.

Section 4. Makes amendments to conform a current statute to the repeal (in bill sec. 6) of AS 08.76.010(b), which requires certain persons who lend money on secondhand articles to keep records electronically.

Section 5. Establishes a new article in AS 08.76 to license and regulate pawnbrokers.

Sec. 08.76.100. Requires a person who wants to engage in business as a pawnbroker to be licensed. Prohibits the transfer or assignment of a license.

Sec. 08.76.110. Sets out the conditions a person must satisfy in order for the department to issue the person a pawnbroker license.

Sec. 08.76.130. Allows the department to consider an application to be withdrawn under certain listed conditions.

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Sec. 08.76.140. Makes a license valid for two years. Allows a person to renew the license. Sets the renewal fee. Adds a renewal penalty fee if renewal is delayed. Prohibits a person who fails to renew from engaging in business as a pawnbroker until the license is renewed or a new license is issued. Allows the department to refuse to renew for a reason that would have prevented the license's issuance.

Sec. 08.76.160. Limits pawn transactions to not more than \$500. Excludes the finance fee and any fees under sec. 08.76.220 from this amount.

Sec. 08.76.170. Prohibits a pawnbroker from knowingly entering into pawnbroker transactions with certain listed categories of persons. Prohibits a pawnbroker from knowingly accepting or receiving misappropriated property.

Sec. 08.76.180. Requires a pawnbroker to maintain a register for pawnbroker transactions. Requires entering in the register certain specified items, including the signature of the pledgor or seller, at the time of each pawnbroker transaction. Allows the register to be made in a book or electronically, but requires electronic format where a pawnbroker is located in a municipality that has more than a certain population. Prohibits a pawnbroker from falsifying or intentionally failing to make an entry of a material matter in a register. Requires a pawnbroker to maintain in good condition in a register the record of a transaction for one year after its completion.

Sec. 08.76.190. Establishes requirements for making entries in a register. Prohibits a pawnbroker from changing a record in a register by obliteration, alteration, or erasure. Provides a method for correcting entries.

Sec. 08.76.200. Requires a pawnbroker to provide to a pledgor or seller a copy of the agreement with the pawnbroker. Lists the items that the agreement must disclose, including each fee charged under secs. 08.76.210 and 08.76.220.

Sec. 08.76.210. Establishes how much a pawnbroker may charge a pledgor as a finance fee. Indicates when a finance fee is considered to be earned.

Sec. 08.76.220. Identifies what other charges a pawnbroker may charge a pledgor. Allows for a processing fee and, when dealing with a firearm, a firearm processing fee and a governmental fee.

Sec. 08.76.230. Prohibits a pawnbroker from selling to, or charging a pledgor for, insurance -- except to cover shipment of property redeemed by mail.

Sec. 08.76.240. Requires a pawnbroker to return pledged property to the pledgor when redeemed. Requires a pawnbroker to provide a redemption receipt. Requires a pawnbroker to use a department-approved form for the receipt.

Sec. 08.76.250. Allows a pawnbroker and a pledgor to agree to an extension of the grace period allowed under sec. 08.76.270(b). Limits the length of an extension. Requires the extension to be written. Requires a pawnbroker to give the pledgor a copy of the extension agreement. Indicates that the agreement must clearly state the last day of the extension and the finance fee for the extension.

Sec. 08.76.260. Requires a pawnbroker to store the pledged property in a secure area. Requires a pawnbroker to maintain the property in an unaltered condition. Prohibits a pawnbroker from leasing the property.

Sec. 08.76.270. With three exceptions relating to hold orders, claims, and lessors, allows a pledgor to redeem pledged property. Establishes what the pledgor must do to redeem the property.

If property is not redeemed as required by closing time on the maturity date, directs the pawnbroker to hold the property for a specified grace period. Allows the pledgor to redeem the property during the grace period. Indicates how and when the pledgor may redeem the property during the grace period.

Requires that any hold order be released before a pledgor may redeem the property. Addresses when a pledgor may redeem property that is subject to a claim under sec. 08.76.370 or 08.76.380.

Provides that title and all interest in property transfer to the pawnbroker if the pledgor does not redeem as provided under (a) - (d) of this section.

Establishes a presumption that the holder of the transaction agreement is the person entitled to redeem. Directs a pawnbroker to deliver the pledged property to the person who presents the transaction agreement and pays the required amounts.

Sec. 08.76.280. Establishes special rules for payment and holding pledged property for pawn transactions relating to military personnel who are deployed abroad for service relating to a military conflict.

Sec. 08.76.290. Prohibits a pawnbroker from using a business method in which a person remains in a motor vehicle while conducting a transaction. Prohibits a pawnbroker from operating during specified early morning hours.

Sec. 08.76.300. Prohibits a pawnbroker from requiring or allowing a person to waive a provision of the new article.

Sec. 08.76.310. Prohibits a pawnbroker from knowingly hiring a person with a background involving a felony, or a misdemeanor involving dishonesty, within the past five years.

Sec. 08.76.320. Allows a law enforcement officer to issue a hold order on property suspected of being misappropriated. Requires the pawnbroker to hold the property until the hold order terminates or a court orders release of the hold order or disposal of the property. Indicates when the hold order takes effect.

Sec. 08.76.330. Allows a law enforcement officer to issue an evidentiary hold order on property that may be needed as evidence in a filed court criminal action. Requires the pawnbroker to hold the property until the hold order terminates or a court orders release of the hold order or disposal of the property. Indicates how long the pawnbroker is to hold the property. Requires the attorney general to notify the pawnbroker after the disposition of the filed court action.

Sec. 08.76.340. Requires a hold order to be in writing and to contain specified information.

Sec. 08.76.350. Limits a police hold order to 30 days. Allows for two extensions of 30 days each. Indicates how extensions are made. Prohibits the issuance of a new police hold order after the second extension has ended. Provides that the termination of a police hold order does not affect an existing or future evidentiary hold order on the same property. Allows for release of a police hold order before the time expires.

Sec. 08.76.360. Allows the department to suspend or revoke a pawnbroker's license for knowingly failing to comply with a hold order.

Sec. 08.76.370. Provides a procedure for a person who believes that pledged property was misappropriated to notify the pawnbroker of the person's claim and to delay the disposal of the property for 30 days, except as provided by sec. 08.76.380.

Sec. 08.76.380. If a misappropriation claim is not resolved within a specified time, allows the claimant to file a court action to order the pawnbroker to return the property. Prohibits the pawnbroker, after notification about the court action, from disposing of the property until the court disposes of the court action or allows the pawnbroker to dispose of the property.

Sec. 08.76.390. Establishes the liability of the pledgor or seller of property to a pawnbroker in a court action under sec. 08.76.380 when the court finds that the property was misappropriated and orders the pawnbroker to return the property to the claimant.

Sec. 08.76.400. Requires a pawnbroker, under certain conditions, to return property to the lessor of the property if the property was leased to the pledgor or seller when pledged or sold to the pawnbroker. Requires the lessor to provide supporting evidence and to pay a specified amount. Removes any liability of the pawnbroker to the pledgor or seller for returning the property to the lessor.

Sec. 08.76.410. Requires a pawnbroker to provide weekly reports to law enforcement officers. Makes the reports confidential under the Alaska Public Records Act and limits how a law enforcement officer and a law enforcement agency may use the reports.

Sec. 08.76.420. Lists what a law enforcement report must contain.

Sec. 08.76.430. Prohibits, if the investigation case number is provided, a pawnbroker from refusing to allow a law enforcement agency to inspect the register, and the purchased property or unredeemed property involved in the investigation, during normal business hours .

Sec. 08.76.440. Allows the department to take the listed disciplinary action against a licensee if the licensee, or the licensee's agents, officers, or employees, violates the new article. Requires notice and a reasonable opportunity to be heard. Within one year after disciplinary action prohibits the department from issuing another license to the licensee or to the listed persons related to the licensee. Requires the department to allow a licensee 30 days to correct a violation before taking disciplinary action.

Sec. 08.76.450. Establishes a civil penalty if a licensee, or an officer, agent, or employee of the licensee, violates the new article. Sets the penalty from \$200 to \$2,000. Requires the amount of the civil penalty to be adjusted for the seriousness of the violation.

Sec. 08.76.460. Authorizes municipalities (with the authority under AS 29) to regulate pawnbrokers if the ordinances at a minimum comply with the new article. Prohibits municipal requirements requiring fees or taxes or restricting hours of operation (except as provided by sec. 08.76.290(2)). Voids an ordinance that violates this section.

Sec. 08.76.470. Authorizes the department to adopt regulations to implement the new article. Requires the department to notify licensees of proposed regulations and to provide them with copies of new regulations.

Sec. 08.76.500. Exempts specified financial institutions from the new article.

Sec. 08.76.590. Defines the terms for the new article.

Section 6. Defines "pawnbroker" for the Uniform Commercial Code.

Section 7. Repeals AS 08.76.010(b), the provision requiring pawnbrokers in certain-sized municipalities to keep records electronically and to submit them as required by the municipal law enforcement agency. Repeals AS 08.76.040, which relates to the disposition of unredeemed property.

Section 8. Allows the Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development to adopt regulations necessary to implement the bill.

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Section 9. Provides transition provisions for pawnbrokers who are currently licensed by a municipality.

Section 10. Voids a municipal ordinance that is in effect on July 1, 2011, if the ordinance does not comply with the new article.

Section 11. Gives sec. 8 an immediate effective date.

Section 12. Gives the bill, except for sec. 8, an effective date of July 1, 2011.

If I may be of further assistance, please advise.

TLB:plm
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