

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 6611

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Law & Justice, February 4, 1998

**Title:** An act relating to body piercing.

**Brief Description:** Prohibiting engaging in body piercing on persons under the age of eighteen.

**Sponsors:** Senators Roach, Anderson, Long, Stevens, Zarelli, Schow and Oke.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Law & Justice: 2/4/98 [DPS].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON LAW & JUSTICE

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6611 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Roach, Chair; Hargrove, Long, Stevens, Thibaudeau and Zarelli.

**Staff:** Lidia Mori (786-7755)

**Background:** The National Environmental Health Association's Body Art Model Code and Guidelines defines body piercing— as any method of piercing the skin or mucosa, except an earlobe, in order to place any object including, but not limited to, rings, studs, bars or other forms of jewelry through the skin or mucosa.— The act of one person piercing the body of another brings up the issues of sanitation, sterilization, disease transmission, the knowledge, experience and hygiene of the operator, and how completely informed the person is that is being pierced.

There is currently no regulation of the body piercing industry. Concern exists regarding the health risks involved in body piercing, especially as they relate to minors.

**Summary of Substitute Bill:** It is a misdemeanor to engage in body piercing on any minor under the age of 18 unless the minor's parent or guardian has provided written consent, proof of identification and is present at the time of piercing. It is a defense to this violation to establish by a preponderance of the evidence that the person engaging in body piercing on a minor made a reasonable, bona fide attempt to discover the true age of the minor by requiring a driver's license or other picture identification. The person engaging in body piercing on a minor may not rely solely on statements made by the minor or the apparent age of the minor.

Body piercing— is defined as the creation of an opening in the body of a human being for the purpose of inserting jewelry or other decoration. Body piercing— does not include the piercing of an earlobe.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:** The original bill did not provide an exception for parents to provide consent to their child's body piercing and the substitute creates this exception.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Testimony For:** A parent should be able to come in with their 16 or 17 year old child and authorize an ear cartilage piercing. Parent and child need to be informed as to what is involved and also as to after care.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** Bryan Civello, Gregory LaRoux, Al D.