

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5628

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Judiciary, February 14, 2003

**Title:** An act relating to recommendations by the sentencing guidelines commission on threshold property values for crimes involving property.

**Brief Description:** Ordering a study of threshold property values for crimes involving property.

**Sponsors:** Senators Brandland, Esser, Kline and Kohl-Welles; by request of Sentencing Guidelines Commission.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Judiciary: 2/12/03, 2/14/03 [DPS].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5628 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators McCaslin, Chair; Esser, Vice Chair; Brandland, Hargrove, Haugen, Johnson and Kline.

**Staff:** Aldo Melchiori (786-7439)

**Background:** The monetary amounts differentiating the various degrees of property crimes in Washington were established in 1975 when the Washington Criminal Code was first established. They have never been adjusted. Since that time, the Consumer Price Index increase has been 3.2 in the United States and 3.5 in Seattle. For comparison, \$250 in 1975 is equivalent to \$800 now and \$1,500 in 1975 dollars is equivalent to \$4,800 now.

**Summary of Substitute Bill:** Theft, possession of stolen property, malicious mischief, and theft of leased or rental property in the first degree occur if the crimes involve property valued at over \$2,500. Theft, possession of stolen property, malicious mischief, and theft of leased or rental property in the second degree occur if the crimes involve property valued at \$751 to \$2,500. Theft, possession of stolen property, malicious mischief, and theft of leased or rental property in the third degree occur if the crimes involve property valued at up to \$750.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:** The study by the Sentencing Guidelines Committee is eliminated. The threshold property values for theft, malicious mischief, possession of stolen property, and theft of leased or rental property are raised from \$250 and \$1,500 to \$750 and \$2500 respectively.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

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

**Testimony For:** Common sense tells us that since these values have not been adjusted since 1975, they need to be raised to account for inflation. The values should be periodically reviewed.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** PRO: Senator Brandland, prime sponsor; Tom McBride, Washington Association of Prosecuting Attorneys; David Boerner, Chair, Sentencing Guidelines Commission; John Austin, Indeterminate Sentencing Review Board; Kim Gordon, Washington Defender's Association, Washington Association of Criminal Defense Attorneys.