

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5861

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Government Operations & Elections, February 28, 2003

Title: An act relating to criminal impersonation of a veteran of the armed forces.

Brief Description: Making it a crime to impersonate a veteran of the armed forces.

Sponsors: Senators Roach, Rasmussen, T. Sheldon, Finkbeiner, Kohl-Welles, Oke, Schmidt and Shin.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Government Operations & Elections: 2/18/03, 2/28/03 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ELECTIONS

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5861 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Roach, Chair; Stevens, Vice Chair; Fairley, Horn and Kastama.

Staff: Diane Smith (786-7410)

Background: Assuming a false identity with intent to defraud or for any other unlawful purpose is the crime of first degree impersonation. This includes pretending to be a public servant or a representative of a person or organization and performing an act in the pretended capacity.

This crime is a gross misdemeanor. A gross misdemeanor is a crime punishable by imprisonment for more than 90 days and less than one year.

Summary of Substitute Bill: Criminal impersonation in the first degree includes the additional situation of falsely assuming the identity of active or retired military personnel with intent to defraud for personal gain or to facilitate any unlawful activity.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The substitute bill adds the requirement of intent to defraud to the elements of criminal impersonation in the first degree.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: Veterans have earned various rights, such as hospitalization, that are used by those impersonating veterans. Likewise, indigent people pose as veterans to prey on the public's sympathy.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Chuck and Diana Lawrence, 4th Infantry Div, Vietnam Veterans of America.