
Business & Financial Services Committee

SSB 5296

Brief Description: Concerning regulation of locksmith services.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Commerce & Labor (originally sponsored by Senators Conway, King, McAuliffe, Hasegawa and Chase).

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Prohibits a locksmith business from misrepresenting its geographic location in its business name or in its listing a local telephone number in a directory or on an Internet web site.

Hearing Date: 3/9/15

Staff: Linda Merelle (786-7092).

Background:

The Consumer Protection Act (CPA) prohibits unfair methods of competition or unfair or deceptive practices in the conduct of any trade or commerce. The CPA may be enforced by private legal action or through a civil action by the Office of the Attorney General. Any person injured by a violation of the CPA may seek actual damages, costs, and attorney's fees. The court may triple the amount of damages awarded but it may not exceed \$25,000.

Summary of Bill:

Locksmiths whose primary business is to provide locksmith services are prohibited from misrepresenting their geographic location by listing a local telephone number in a local telephone directory or on an Internet website if calls to the number are routinely forwarded to a location outside the calling area covered by the directory and the listing fails to conspicuously disclose the locality and state in which the business is located.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Those whose primary business is providing locksmith services are also prohibited from listing a business name in a local telephone directory or an Internet website if the name misrepresents the geographic location of the business and the listing fails to disclose the locality and state of the business. Further, these locksmiths must conspicuously display either the business license number or the Unified Business Identifier account number on the business website and all advertising.

Violations of the prohibitions of this act are considered unfair or deceptive acts in trade or commerce and an unfair method of competition.

The requirements and prohibitions under this bill do not apply to businesses that provide locksmith services but not as their primary business, which may include businesses that provide roadside or towing services.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available on companion House Bill 1064.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.