



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
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TO: Committee on the Judiciary
FROM: Senator William N. Brownsberger *wvb*
RE: S615, An Act relative to penalties for shoplifting
DATE: October 22, 2013

I am writing in support of S625, An Act relative to penalties for shoplifting.

I filed this bill in response to learning of cases where merchants were demanding hundreds of dollars of restitution from people (teenagers) who allegedly had shoplifted items worth less than \$20.00.

S625 would provide the following protections:

- 1) Full disclosure to the accused
- 2) Limit the amount that can be demanded outside of a court process, unless there has been a shoplifting conviction (existing law allows "actual damages" plus up to \$500; the amended version would still allow a court to award this much to a merchant, but wouldn't allow the merchant to simply demand \$500 plus its unilateral estimate of actual damages as "settlement")
- 3) Impose sanctions for abusing this process

I hope that the Committee will report S625 favorably.

