

that you return this bill and strike this provision. The other day, as a matter of fact, February 19th I gave you a handout which I am sure you have forgotten. Some of you may not even have read it but it contained an article that documented an incident that I had told you about during one of my earlier attempts to do what I am trying to do now. I will read the article because it is brief. It is from the World Herald, February 5, 1982, and it is dated-lined Chicago Associated Press: Three high-school students doing research on shoplifting stuffed their pockets at a suburban store in plain view of fifty customers. Nobody turned them in. They got one dirty look from a woman shopper but "the rest either walked away or looked away." Richard Barren, teacher of a Marketing class at Suburban Wheeling Highschool said Thursday, "I'm totally amazed that no one reported the incidents to the store manager who had given the students permission to carry it out." Barren said, "They must have collected about three hundred dollars worth of merchandise." He said, "there were more than one hundred customers in the store during that time and at least fifty of them saw the whole thing. Many of them were standing next to the shoplifters." This indicates that the public is not concerned about a careless merchant. The public will not turn in shoplifters. The public feels that merchants should put in place adequate systems of security to protect their own goods and should a merchant fail to do that, the public apparently feels that the punishment goes with the carelessness. He or she will have certain of his or her items appropriated without being paid for them. A second article on that attachment or handout discuss the case in Washington, D.C. where a murder had been committed and the gun used had been stolen from the headquarters of the National Rifle Association. A verdict was rendered against the National Rifle Association on the theory that they were careless about protecting their property. Such being the case they were held responsible for whatever was done of a detrimental nature with that property to some innocent party. So in the shoplifting article you see that the public is not interested in filling in the gaps in security left by careless merchants. In the second situation you see that the courts hold people responsible for their own property and what is done with it. So the Legislature ought not adopt the attitude that simply because an item is owned by a person, the Legislature should enact laws to make sure that person maintains possession and control of it even if he or she is totally careless and exercises not one iota of caution in protecting it. People are responsible for their own property. I'm asking that you return this bill, strike that provision so that the merchants will be put on notice that care is required in the protecting of their own goods, but more important than that, in my opinion, is to maintain