

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

H.B. 151  
By: Truitt  
Criminal Jurisprudence  
Committee Report (Unamended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

Burglary of motor vehicles has been increasing at an alarming rate. Prior to 1994, this crime was a felony. However, during the 73rd Session, the penalty was reduced to a Class A misdemeanor.

Between 1992 and 1994, the number of car burglaries in Texas actually decreased 13%, from nearly 260,000 to around 211,000. Since 1994, the number has increased 30% to nearly 273,000 in 2003.

The cost of this crime to Texans is going through the roof. In 1994, total dollar losses due to car burglaries in Texas was a little over \$65 million. In 2003 the dollar losses exceeded \$204 million, a 214% increase in less than 10 years.

According to the Houston Police Department, the word is out among the criminals that they can burglarize cars and only get their hand slapped, and that's if they're caught. Criminals are being coached in jail to commit this crime because it isn't counted as a parole violation if they're caught.

This bill would immediately change this environment and enable law enforcement to fight back.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

### **ANALYSIS**

House Bill 151 amends the Penal Code by increasing the punishment for the offense of burglary of a vehicle to a state jail felony.

### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

September 1, 2005.