



## Legislation Summary:

### An Act relative to larceny

Initial bill number: [S873/H967](#) (Bill numbers will change as legislation proceeds.)

Sponsors: Sen. Patricia Jehlen, Rep. Chynah Tyler

This bill is focused only on [raising the felony larceny thresholds](#) under various statutes, increasing the lowest level from \$250 (which is the lowest in the nation) to \$1500 (although Texas and Wisconsin have levels at \$2500, which would be preferable).

**Why this is good:** Currently in Massachusetts a crime against property valued at or above \$250 constitutes a felony and can result in up to five years imprisonment in the state prison. This dollar amount has not been changed for decades, with the result that punishments now far exceed the nature of the crime. This current baseline is less than the cost of the average cell phone most of us carry. Further, it is less by a factor of five than the first cutoff in small claims court filings, which now goes up to \$7,000.

**Bottom Line:** This bill would remove what should be considered petty theft from the category of a felony and return it to being a misdemeanor. It would be even better if the threshold were indexed to inflation levels.