

**Committee on Communications, Energy,
And Public Utilities**

SB 338 — Theft of Utility Services

by Senator Simpson

The bill amends s. 812.14, F.S., to provide that the theft of utility services is punishable as theft under s. 812.014, F.S., the general theft statute. As a result of this change, a person who commits theft of utility services will not necessarily commit a first degree misdemeanor, the current degree of offenses under s. 812.14, F.S. Instead, the offense degree and penalties relevant to a theft depend upon the value of the property stolen, which includes services, and other factors.

The bill also increases the civil penalty for a person found in a civil action to have violated the statute on utility theft from the current three times the amount of services stolen or \$1,000, whichever is greater, to three times the amount stolen or \$3,000, whichever is greater.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect October 1, 2013.

Vote: Senate 39-0; House 90-25