

By Senator Villalobos

38-1182-04

1                                   A bill to be entitled  
2           An act relating to the practice of law;  
3           amending s. 454.23, F.S.; increasing the  
4           criminal penalty for the unauthorized practice  
5           of law and for licensed attorneys violating ch.  
6           454, F.S., from a misdemeanor of the first  
7           degree to a felony of the third degree;  
8           providing an effective date.

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10 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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12           Section 1. Section 454.23, Florida Statutes, is  
13 amended to read:

14           454.23 Penalties.--Any person not licensed or  
15 otherwise authorized by the Supreme Court of Florida who shall  
16 practice law or assume or hold himself or herself out to the  
17 public as qualified to practice in this state, or who  
18 willfully pretends to be, or willfully takes or uses any name,  
19 title, addition, or description implying that he or she is  
20 qualified, or recognized by law as qualified, to act as a  
21 lawyer in this state, and any person entitled to practice who  
22 violates ~~shall violate~~ any provision ~~provisions~~ of this  
23 chapter, commits ~~shall be guilty of a~~ felony ~~misdemeanor~~ of  
24 the third ~~first~~ degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082,  
25 ~~or s. 775.083, or s. 775.084.~~

26           Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2004.

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29                                   SENATE SUMMARY

30           Increases penalties for the unlicensed practice of law  
31           and violations of ch. 454, F.S., from a first-degree  
          misdemeanor to a third-degree felony.