ASSEMBLY BILL NO. 306-COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

MARCH 8, 2001

Referred to Committee on Judiciary

SUMMARY—Revises provisions concerning interception and disclosure of wire, radio or oral communications. (BDR 15-1303)

FISCAL NOTE: Effect on Local Government: No.

Effect on the State: Yes.

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EXPLANATION – Matter in *bolded italics* is new; matter between brackets [omitted material] is material to be omitted.

AN ACT relating to crimes; revising the provisions concerning the interception and disclosure of wire, radio or oral communications; providing penalties; and providing other matters properly relating thereto.

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEVADA, REPRESENTED IN SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. NRS 199.540 is hereby amended to read as follows:

199.540 1. It is unlawful for an officer or employee of a court or law enforcement agency, or any employee of a communications common carrier, landlord, custodian or other person who is ordered pursuant to subsection 2 of NRS 179.475 to furnish information, facilities and technical assistance necessary to accomplish an authorized interception of a wire, *radio* or oral communication, having knowledge that an order has been applied for or has been issued authorizing the interception of a wire, *radio* or oral communication in accordance with NRS 179.410 to 179.515, inclusive, *and sections 8 and 9 of this act*, to:

(a) Give notice of the interception; or

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(b) Attempt to give notice of the interception,

to any person with the intent to obstruct, impede or prevent the interception of the wire, *radio* or oral communication.

- 2. It is unlawful for an officer or employee of a court or law enforcement agency, or any employee of a communications common carrier, landlord, custodian or other person who is ordered pursuant to subsection 2 of NRS 179.475 to furnish information, facilities and technical assistance necessary to accomplish an authorized interception of a wire , *radio* or oral communication, having knowledge that an order has been applied for or has been issued authorizing the use of a pen register or trap and trace device to:
 - (a) Give notice of the use of the pen register or device; or



- (b) Attempt to give notice of the use of the pen register or device,
 - to any person with the intent to obstruct, impede or prevent that use.
- 3. A person who violates any provision of subsection 1 or 2 is guilty of a category D felony and shall be punished as provided in NRS 193.130.
- 4. As used in this section:

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- (a) "Communications common carrier" has the meaning ascribed to it in section 8 of this act.
- (b) "Interception" has the meaning ascribed to the term "intercept" in NRS 179.430.
- (c) "Oral communication" has the meaning ascribed to it in NRS 179.440.
- (d) "Radio communication" has the meaning ascribed to it in section 9 of this act.
- (e) "Wire communication" has the meaning ascribed to it in NRS 179,455.
 - Sec. 2. NRS 200.610 is hereby amended to read as follows:
 - 200.610 As used in NRS 200.610 to 200.690, inclusive:
- 1. ["Person" includes public officials and law enforcement officers of the state and of a county or municipality or other political subdivision of the state.
- 2. "Wire communication" means the transmission of writing, signs, signals, pictures and sounds of all kinds by wire, cable, or other similar connection between the points of origin and reception of such transmission, including all facilities and services incidental to such transmission, which facilities and services include, among other things, the receipt, forwarding and delivering of communications.
- 3. "Radio communication" means the transmission of writing, signs, signals, pictures, and sounds of all kinds by radio or other wireless 28 29 30 methods, including all facilities and services incidental to such 31 transmission, which facilities and services include, among other things, the receipt, forwarding and delivering of communications. The term does not 32 include the transmission of writing, signs, signals, pictures and sounds 33 broadcast by amateurs or public or municipal agencies of the State of 34 35 Nevada, or by others for the use of the general public.] "Contents" has the meaning ascribed to it in NRS 179.420. 36
 - 2. "Intercept" has the meaning ascribed to it in NRS 179.430.
 - 3. "Oral communication" has the meaning ascribed to it in NRS 179.440.
 - 4. "Person" has the meaning ascribed to it in NRS 179.445.
 - 5. "Radio communication" has the meaning ascribed to it in section 9 of this act.
 - 6. "Wire communication" has the meaning ascribed to it in NRS 179.455.
 - Sec. 3. NRS 200.620 is hereby amended to read as follows:
- 46 200.620 1. Except as otherwise provided in *subsection 2 or* NRS 179.410 to 179.515, inclusive, *and sections 8 and 9 of this act*, 209.419 and 704.195, it is unlawful for any person to intercept or attempt to intercept any wire *or radio* communication unless —



(a) The interception or attempted interception is made with the prior consent [of one] of the parties to the *communication*.

- 2. A person may intercept or attempt to intercept a wire or radio communication if:
- (a) The interception or attempted interception is made with the prior consent of one of the parties to the communication; and
- (b) An emergency situation exists and it is impractical to obtain a court order as required by NRS 179.410 to 179.515, inclusive, *and sections 8 and 9 of this act* before the interception, in which event the interception is subject to the requirements of subsection [3.] 4. If the application for ratification is denied, any use or disclosure of the information so intercepted is unlawful, and the person who made the interception shall notify the sender and the receiver of the communication that:
 - (1) The communication was intercepted; and

- (2) Upon application to the court, ratification of the interception was denied.
- [2.] 3. This section does not apply to any person, or to the officers, employees or agents of any person, engaged in the business of providing service and facilities for wire *or radio* communication where the interception or attempted interception is to construct, maintain, conduct or operate the service or facilities of that person.
- [3.] 4. Any person who has made an interception in an emergency situation as provided in [paragraph (b) of subsection 1] subsection 2 shall, within 72 hours of the interception, make a written application to a justice of the supreme court or district judge for ratification of the interception. The interception must not be ratified unless the applicant shows that:
- (a) An emergency situation existed and it was impractical to obtain a court order before the interception; and
- (b) Except for the absence of a court order, the interception met the requirements of NRS 179.410 to 179.515, inclusive [-
- -4.1, and sections 8 and 9 of this act.
- 5. NRS 200.610 to 200.690, inclusive, do not prohibit the recording, and NRS 179.410 to 179.515, inclusive, and sections 8 and 9 of this act do not prohibit the reception in evidence, of conversations on wire or radio communications installed in the office of an official law enforcement or fire-fighting agency, or a public utility, if the equipment used for the recording is installed in a facility for wire or radio communications or on a telephone with a number listed in a directory, on which emergency calls or requests by a person for response by the law enforcement or fire-fighting agency or public utility are likely to be received. In addition, those sections do not prohibit the recording or reception in evidence of conversations initiated by the law enforcement or fire-fighting agency or public utility from such a facility or telephone in connection with responding to the original call or request, if the agency or public utility informs the other party that the conversation is being recorded.
 - **Sec. 4.** NRS 200.630 is hereby amended to read as follows:
- 200.630 1. Except as otherwise provided in NRS 179.410 to 179.515, inclusive, *and sections 8 and 9 of this act* and 704.195, a person shall not disclose the [existence, content, substance, purport, effect or



meaning contents of any wire or radio communication to any person unless authorized to do so by either the sender or receiver.] the disclosure is made with the prior consent of the parties to the communication.

- 2. This section does not apply to any person, or the officers, employees or agents of any person, engaged in furnishing service or facilities for wire or radio communication where the disclosure is made:
- (a) For the purpose of construction, maintenance, conduct or operation of the service or facilities of such a person;
 - (b) To the intended receiver, his agent or attorney;

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- (c) In response to a subpoena issued by a court of competent jurisdiction; or
 - (d) On written demand of other lawful authority.

Sec. 5. NRS 200.650 is hereby amended to read as follows:

200.650 1. Except as otherwise provided in NRS 179.410 to 179.515, inclusive, and sections 8 and 9 of this act and 704.195, [a person shall not intrude upon the privacy of other persons by surreptitiously listening to, monitoring or recording, or attempting to listen to, monitor or record, it is unlawful for any person to intercept or attempt to intercept, by means of any [mechanical,] electronic, mechanical or other [listening] device, any [private conversation] oral communication engaged in by [the] other persons, or to disclose the [existence, content, substance, purport, effect or meaning] contents of any [conversation so listened to, monitored or recorded, unless authorized to do so by one of the persons engaging in the conversation.] oral communication so intercepted, unless the interception, attempted interception or disclosure is made with the prior consent of the parties to the communication.

2. "Electronic, mechanical or other device" has the meaning ascribed to it in NRS 179.425.

Sec. 6. NRS 200.690 is hereby amended to read as follows: 200.690 1. A person who willfully and knowingly violates NRS 200.620 to 200.650, inclusive:

- (a) Shall be punished for a category D felony as provided in NRS
- (b) Is liable to **a** each person whose wire , radio or oral communication is intercepted without his *prior* consent for:
- (1) Actual damages or liquidated damages of \$100 per day of violation but not less than \$1,000, whichever is greater;
 - (2) Punitive damages; and
- (3) His costs reasonably incurred in the action, including a reasonable attorney's fee,
- all of which may be recovered by civil action.
- 2. A good faith reliance by a public utility on a written request for interception by one party to a conversation is a complete defense to any civil or criminal action brought against the public utility on account of the interception.
- Sec. 7. Chapter 179 of NRS is hereby amended by adding thereto the provisions set forth as sections 8 and 9 of this act.



- Sec. 8. "Communications common carrier" means any person who provides a service that allows a user or subscriber to send or receive a wire, radio or oral communication.
- Sec. 9. 1. "Radio communication" means the transmission of writing, signs, signals, pictures, and sounds of all kinds by radio or other wireless methods, including all facilities and services incidental to such transmission, which facilities and services include, without limitation, the receiving, forwarding and delivering of communications.
- 2. The term does not include the transmission of writing, signs, signals, pictures and sounds broadcasted by:
 - (a) Amateurs;

- (b) The State of Nevada or a political subdivision of the State of Nevada; or
 - (c) Another person for the use of the general public.
 - **Sec. 10.** NRS 179.410 is hereby amended to read as follows:
- 179.410 As used in NRS 179.410 to 179.515, inclusive, *and sections 8 and 9 of this act*, except where the context otherwise requires, the words and terms defined in NRS 179.415 to 179.455, inclusive, *and sections 8 and 9 of this act*, have the meanings ascribed to them in those sections.
 - Sec. 11. NRS 179.415 is hereby amended to read as follows:
- 179.415 "Aggrieved person" means a person who was a party to any intercepted wire, *radio* or oral communication or a person against whom the interception was directed.
 - **Sec. 12.** NRS 179.420 is hereby amended to read as follows:
 - 179.420 "Contents" when used with respect to any wire, *radio* or oral communication includes any information concerning the identity of the parties to such communication or the existence, substance, purport or meaning of that communication.
 - Sec. 13. NRS 179.425 is hereby amended to read as follows:
 - 179.425 "Electronic, mechanical [,] or other device" means any device or apparatus which can be used to intercept a wire , *radio* or oral communication other than:
 - 1. Any telephone or telegraph instrument, equipment or facility, or any component thereof:
 - (a) Furnished to the subscriber or user by a communications common carrier in the ordinary course of its business and being used by the subscriber or user in the ordinary course of its business; or
- (b) Being used by a communications common carrier in the ordinary course of its business, or by an investigative or law enforcement officer in the ordinary course of his duties.
 - 2. A hearing aid or similar device being used to correct subnormal hearing to not better than normal.
 - **Sec. 14.** NRS 179.430 is hereby amended to read as follows:
- 179.430 "Intercept" means the aural *or other* acquisition of the contents of any wire , *radio* or oral communication through the use of any electronic, mechanical or other device or of any sending or receiving equipment.



Sec. 15. NRS 179.460 is hereby amended to read as follows:

179.460 1. The attorney general or the district attorney of any county may apply to a supreme court justice or to a district judge in the county where the interception is to take place for an order authorizing the interception of wire, *radio* or oral communications, and the judge may, in accordance with NRS 179.470 to 179.515, inclusive, grant an order authorizing the interception of wire, radio or oral communications by investigative or law enforcement officers having responsibility for the investigation of the offense as to which the application is made, when the interception may provide evidence of the commission of murder, kidnapping, robbery, extortion, bribery, destruction of public property by explosives, a sexual offense against a child or the commission of any offense which is made a felony by the provisions of chapter 453 or 454 of

- 2. A good faith reliance by a public utility on a court order [shall constitute constitutes a complete defense to any civil or criminal action brought against the public utility on account of any interception made pursuant to the order.
- 3. As used in this section, "sexual offense against a child" includes any act upon a child constituting:
 - (a) Incest pursuant to NRS 201.180;

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- (b) Lewdness with a child pursuant to NRS 201.230;
- (c) Annoyance or molestation of a child pursuant to NRS 207.260;
- (d) Sado-masochistic abuse pursuant to NRS 201.262;
- (e) Sexual assault pursuant to NRS 200.366;
- 26 (f) Statutory sexual seduction pursuant to NRS 200.368; or
 - (g) Open or gross lewdness pursuant to NRS 201.210.

Sec. 16. NRS 179.465 is hereby amended to read as follows: 179.465

1. Any investigative or law enforcement officer who, by any means authorized by NRS 179.410 to 179.515, inclusive, and sections 8 and 9 of this act or 704.195 or 18 U.S.C. §§ 2510 to 2520, inclusive, has obtained knowledge of the contents of any wire, radio or oral communication, or evidence derived therefrom, may disclose the contents to another investigative or law enforcement officer or use the contents to the extent that the disclosure or use is appropriate to the proper performance of the official duties of the officer making or receiving the disclosure.

Any person who has received, by any means authorized by NRS 179.410 to 179.515, inclusive, and sections 8 and 9 of this act or 704.195 or 18 U.S.C. §§ 2510 to 2520, inclusive, or by a statute of another state, any information concerning a wire, radio or oral communication, or evidence derived therefrom intercepted in accordance with the provisions of NRS 179.410 to 179.515, inclusive, and sections 8 and 9 of this act may disclose the contents of that communication or the derivative evidence while giving testimony under oath or affirmation in any criminal proceeding in any court or before any grand jury in this state, or in any court of the United States or of any state, or in any federal or state grand jury proceeding.



3. An otherwise privileged wire , *radio* or oral communication intercepted in accordance with, or in violation of, the provisions of NRS 179.410 to 179.515, inclusive, and sections 8 and 9 of this act or 18

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- U.S.C. §§ 2510 to 2520, inclusive, does not lose its privileged character.4. When an investigative or law enforcement officer engaged in intercepting wire, radio or oral communications as authorized by NRS 179.410 to 179.515, inclusive, and sections 8 and 9 of this act intercepts wire, radio or oral communications relating to offenses other than those specified in the order provided for in NRS 179.460, the contents of the communications and the evidence derived therefrom may be disclosed or used as provided in subsection 1. The direct evidence derived from the communications is inadmissible in a criminal proceeding, but any other evidence obtained as a result of knowledge obtained from the communications may be disclosed or used as provided in subsection 2 when authorized or approved by a justice of the supreme court or district judge who finds upon application made as soon as practicable that the contents of the communications were intercepted in accordance with the provisions of NRS 179.410 to 179.515, inclusive, and sections 8 and 9 of this act or 18 U.S.C. §§ 2510 to 2520, inclusive.

 Sec. 17. NRS 179.470 is hereby amended to read as follows:
- 179.470 1. Each application for an order authorizing the interception of a wire, *radio* or oral communication must be made in writing upon oath or affirmation to a justice of the supreme court or district judge and must state the applicant's authority to make such application. Each application must include the following information:
- (a) The identity of the investigative or law enforcement officer making the application, and the officer authorizing the application.
- (b) A full and complete statement of the facts and circumstances relied upon by the applicant to justify his belief that an order should be issued, including:
- (1) Details as to the particular offense that is being, has been or is about to be committed.
- (2) A particular description of the nature and location of the facilities from which or the place where the communication is to be intercepted, the facilities to be used and the means by which such interception is to be made.
- (3) A particular description of the type of communications sought to be intercepted.
- (4) The identity of the person, if known, who is committing, has committed or is about to commit an offense and whose communications are to be intercepted.
- (c) A full and complete statement as to whether or not other investigative procedures have been tried and failed or why they reasonably appear to be unlikely to succeed if tried or to be too dangerous.
- (d) A statement of the period of time for which the interception is required to be maintained. If the nature of the investigation is such that the authorization for interception should not automatically terminate when the described type of communication has been obtained, a particular



description of facts establishing probable cause to believe that additional communications of the same type will occur thereafter.

- (e) A full and complete statement of the facts concerning all previous applications known to the person authorizing and making the application made to any judge for authorization to intercept wire , *radio* or oral communications involving any of the same persons, facilities or places specified in the application, and the action taken by the judge on each such application.
- (f) Where the application is for the extension of an order, a statement setting forth the results thus far obtained from the interception, or a reasonable explanation of the failure to obtain such results.
- 2. The judge may require the applicant to furnish additional testimony or documentary evidence under oath or affirmation in support of the application. Oral testimony must be reduced to writing.
- 3. Upon such application the judge may enter an ex parte order, as requested or as modified, authorizing interception of wire , *radio* or oral communications within the territorial jurisdiction of the court in which the judge is sitting, if the judge determines on the basis of the facts submitted by the applicant that:
- (a) There is probable cause for belief that a person is committing, has committed or is about to commit an offense for which interception is authorized by NRS 179.460.
- (b) There is probable cause for belief that particular communications concerning that offense will be obtained through such interception.
- (c) Normal investigative procedures have been tried and have failed or reasonably appear to be unlikely to succeed if tried or appear to be too dangerous.
- (d) There is probable cause for belief that the facilities from which, or the place where, the wire , *radio* or oral communications are to be intercepted are being used or are about to be used by such person in connection with the commission of such offense or are leased to, listed in the name of, or commonly used by such person.
 - **Sec. 18.** NRS 179.475 is hereby amended to read as follows:
- 179.475 1. Each order authorizing the interception of any wire , *radio* or oral communication [shall] *must* specify:
- (a) The identity of the person, if known, whose communications are to be intercepted.
- (b) The nature and location of the place where or communication facilities to which authority to intercept is granted, the facilities to be used and the means by which such interceptions [shall] are to be made.
- (c) A particular description of the type of communication sought to be intercepted, and a statement of the particular offense to which it relates.
- (d) The identity of the agency authorized to intercept the communications, and of the person authorizing the application.
- (e) The period of time during which such interception is authorized, including a statement as to whether or not the interception [shall] must automatically terminate when the described communication has been first obtained.



2. An order authorizing the interception of a wire, *radio* or oral communication [shall,] *must*, upon request of the applicant, direct that a communications common carrier, landlord, custodian or other person shall furnish the applicant forthwith all information, facilities, and technical assistance necessary to accomplish the interception unobtrusively and with a minimum of interference with the services that such carrier, landlord, custodian, or person is according the person whose communications are to be intercepted. Any communications common carrier, landlord, custodian or other person furnishing such facilities or technical assistance [shall] *must* be compensated therefor by the applicant at the prevailing rates.

3. No order entered under this section may authorize the interception of any wire, *radio* or oral communication for any period longer than is necessary to achieve the objective of the authorization, and in no event longer than 30 days. Extensions of an order may be granted, but only upon application for an extension made in accordance with the procedures provided in NRS 179.470. The period of extension [shall] *must* be no longer than the authorizing judge deems necessary to achieve the purposes for which it was granted and in no event for longer than 30 days. Every order and extension thereof [shall] *must* contain a provision that the authorization to intercept [shall] *must* be executed as soon as practicable, [shall] *must* be conducted in such a way as to minimize the interception of communications not otherwise subject to interception under this statute, and [shall] *must* terminate upon attainment of the authorized objective, or in any event in 30 days.

Sec. 19. NRS 179.485 is hereby amended to read as follows:

179.485 The contents of any wire , *radio* or oral communication intercepted by any means authorized by NRS 179.410 to 179.515, inclusive, [shall,] and sections 8 and 9 of this act, must, if possible, be recorded on tape or wire or other comparable device. The recording of the contents of any wire , radio or oral communication [under] pursuant to this section [shall] must be done in such a way as will protect the recording from editing or other alterations. Immediately upon the expiration of the period of the order, or extensions thereof, such recordings [shall] must be made available to the judge issuing such order and sealed under his directions. Custody of the recordings [shall] must be placed with whomever the judge directs. [They shall] The recordings must not be destroyed except upon an order of the judge issuing such order and in any event **[shall]** must be kept for 10 years. Duplicate recordings may be made for use or disclosure pursuant to the provisions of subsection 1 of NRS 179.465 for investigations. The presence of the seal provided for by this section, or a satisfactory explanation for the absence thereof, is a prerequisite for the use or disclosure of the contents of any wire, radio or oral communication or evidence derived therefrom [under] pursuant to subsection 2 of NRS 179.465.

Sec. 20. NRS 179.495 is hereby amended to read as follows:

179.495 1. Within a reasonable time but not later than 90 days after the termination of the period of an order or any extension thereof, the judge who issued the order shall cause to be served on the chief of the investigation division of the department of motor vehicles and public



safety, persons named in the order and any other parties to intercepted communications, an inventory which must include notice of:

(a) The fact of the entry and a copy of the order.

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(b) The fact that during the period wire, *radio* or oral communications were or were not intercepted.

The inventory filed pursuant to this section is confidential and must not be released for inspection unless subpoenaed by a court of competent jurisdiction.

2. The judge, upon receipt of a written request from any person who was a party to an intercepted communication or from the person's attorney, shall make available to the person or his counsel those portions of the intercepted communications which contain his conversation. On an ex parte showing of good cause to a district judge, the serving of the inventory required by this section may be postponed for such time as the judge may provide.

Sec. 21. NRS 179.500 is hereby amended to read as follows:

The contents of any intercepted wire, radio or oral communication or evidence derived therefrom [shall] must not be received in evidence or otherwise disclosed in any trial, hearing or other proceeding in any court of this state unless each party, not less than 10 days before the trial, hearing or proceeding, has been furnished with a copy of the court order and accompanying application under which the interception was authorized and a transcript of any communications intercepted. Such 10day period may be waived by the judge if he finds that it was not possible to furnish the party with such information 10 days before the trial, hearing or proceeding and that the party will not be prejudiced by the delay in receiving such information.

Sec. 22. NRS 179.505 is hereby amended to read as follows:179.505 1. Any aggrieved person in any trial, hearing or proceeding in or before any court, department, officer, agency or other authority of this state, or a political subdivision thereof, may move to suppress the contents of any intercepted wire, *radio* or oral communication, or evidence derived therefrom, on the grounds that:

- (a) The communication was unlawfully intercepted.
- (b) The order of authorization under which it was intercepted is insufficient on its face.
- (c) The interception was not made in conformity with the order of authorization.
 - (d) The period of the order and any extension had expired.
- Such motion [shall] must be made before the trial, hearing or proceeding unless there was no opportunity to make such motion or the person was not aware of the grounds of the motion. If the motion is granted, the contents of the intercepted wire, *radio* or oral communication, or evidence derived therefrom, [shall] must be treated as having been obtained in violation of NRS 179.410 to 179.515, inclusive [], and sections 8 and 9 of this act. The judge, upon the filing of such motion by the aggrieved person, may in his discretion make available to the aggrieved person or his counsel for inspection such portions of the intercepted



communication or evidence derived therefrom as the judge determines to be in the interest of justice.

Sec. 23. NRS 179.515 is hereby amended to read as follows:

179.515 1. In January of each year, the attorney general and the district attorney of each county shall report to the Administrative Office of the United States Courts the information required to be reported pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 2519. A copy of the report must be filed with the investigation division of the department of motor vehicles and public safety. In the case of a joint application by the attorney general and a district attorney, both shall make the report.

- 2. Every justice of the supreme court or district judge who signs an order authorizing or denying an interception shall, within 30 days after the termination of the order or any extension thereof, file with the investigation division of the department of motor vehicles and public safety on forms approved by the division a report containing the same information required to be reported pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 2519. The report must also indicate whether a party to an intercepted wire *or radio* communication had consented to the interception.
- 3. The willful failure of any officer to report any information known to him which is required to be reported pursuant to subsection 1 or 2 constitutes malfeasance in office and, in such cases, the secretary of state shall, when the wrong becomes known to him, institute legal proceedings for the removal of that officer.
- 4. The investigation division of the department of motor vehicles and public safety shall, on or before April 30 of each year, compile a report consisting of a summary and analysis of all reports submitted to the division pursuant to this section during the previous calendar year. The report is a public record and may be inspected by any person during the regular office hours of the division.
- **Sec. 24.** The amendatory provisions of this act do not apply to offenses committed before October 1, 2001.
 - **Sec. 25.** The amendatory provisions of this act do not apply to an action pursuant to NRS 200.690 filed before October 1, 2001.



