

1 HOUSE BILL NO. 161  
2 INTRODUCED BY F. NAVE  
3 BY REQUEST OF THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
4

5 A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT GENERALLY REVISING COMPUTER CRIME LAWS; PROVIDING  
6 DEFINITIONS; REVISING THE OFFENSE OF UNLAWFUL USE OF A COMPUTER; PROVIDING  
7 EXCEPTIONS; AND AMENDING SECTIONS 45-6-310 AND 45-6-311, MCA."  
8

9 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:  
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11 **Section 1.** Section 45-6-310, MCA, is amended to read:

12 **"45-6-310. Definition Definitions -- computer use.** As used in 45-6-311 and this section, the term  
13 following definitions apply:

14 (1) "Access" means to approach, instruct, communicate with, store data in, retrieve data from, or  
15 otherwise make use of any resources of a computer, computer system, computer network, or electronic device.

16 (2) "Authorization" means a process ensuring that correctly authenticated users can access only  
17 those resources for which the owner of the resource has given the users explicit permission.

18 (3) "Computer" means an electronic device used to create, receive, transmit, store, or process  
19 data of any kind, or to run programs stored on hardware or software, and includes any device attached  
20 physically or connected intangibly to the computer.

21 (4) "Computer contaminant" means any set of computer instructions designed to modify, damage,  
22 destroy, record, or transmit information within a computer, computer system, or computer network without the  
23 intent or permission of the owner of the information. The term includes but is not limited to a group of computer  
24 instructions, commonly called viruses or worms, that are self-replicating or self-propagating and that are  
25 designed to contaminate other computer programs or computer data, consume computer resources, modify  
26 destroy, record, or transmit data, or in some other fashion usurp or interfere with the normal operation of the  
27 computer, computer system, or computer network.

**Amendment - 2nd Reading/2nd House-tan - Requested by: Andrea Olsen - (S) Committee of Whole**

- 2023

68th Legislature 2023

Drafter: Julianne Burkhardt, 406-444-4025

HB0161.003.002

1            (12) "Trade secret" has the meaning provided in 30-14-402."

2

3            **Section 2.** Section 45-6-311, MCA, is amended to read:

4            **"45-6-311. Unlawful use of a computer -- EXCEPTIONS.** (1) A EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN SUBSECTIONS (3)

5 AND; (4), (5), AND (7), A person commits the offense of unlawful use of a computer if the when a THE person

6 knowingly or purposely and without authorization:

7            (a) destroys or renders inoperable a computer, computer system, or computer network or any part

8 of a computer system or network with the purpose to make OF MAKING the device or system physically

9 inaccessible or to render the data, programs, or supporting documentation inaccessible or unusable;

10           (a)(b) obtains the use or access of any computer, computer system, or computer network without

11 actual consent of the owner;

12           (b) alters or destroys or causes another to alter or destroy a computer program or computer software

13 without consent of the owner; or

14           (c) obtains the use of or alters or destroys a computer, computer system, computer network, or any

15 part thereof as part of a deception for the purpose of obtaining money, property, or computer services from the

16 owner of the computer, computer system, computer network, or part thereof or from any other person.

17           (c) introduces a computer contaminant that deletes, modifies, or renders unavailable data,

18 programs, or supporting documentation residing or existing internal or external to a computer, computer

19 system, computer network, or electronic device;

20           (d) destroys data, programs, or supporting documentation residing or existing internal or external

21 to a computer, computer system, computer network, or electronic device;

22           (e) discloses or takes data, programs, or supporting documentation that is a trade secret,

23 confidential, or otherwise protected as provided by law or is data that materially compromises the security,

24 confidentiality, or integrity of personal information as defined in 30-14-1704 residing or existing internal or

25 external to a computer, computer system, computer network, or electronic device;

26           (f) introduces a computer contaminant to gain access to data, programs, supporting

27 documentation, computer systems, including peripheral devices, or computer networks to delete, encrypt,

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1 modify, append, or otherwise render unavailable data, programs, supporting documentation, computer systems,  
2 including peripheral devices, computer networks, or electronic devices owned or operated by a governmental or  
3 private entity or person;

4 (g) uses or changes in any way another person's computer credentials without the person's  
5 permission; or

6 (h) uses another person's computer or computer credentials to track that person's movements or  
7 monitor that person's communications without that person's consent.

8 (2) A person convicted of the offense of unlawful use of a computer involving loss of property not  
9 exceeding \$1,500 in value OR WHEN NO LOSS CAN BE ARTICULATED shall be fined not to exceed \$1,500 or be  
10 imprisoned in the county jail for a term not to exceed 6 months, or both. A person convicted of the offense of  
11 unlawful use of a computer involving loss of property exceeding \$1,500 in value shall be fined not more than 2  
12 1/2 times the value of the property used, altered, destroyed, or obtained or be imprisoned in the state prison for  
13 a term not to exceed 10 years, or both.

14 (3) A PERSON IS NOT IN VIOLATION OF THIS SECTION IF THE PERSON ENCRYPTS OR MODIFIES ANOTHER  
15 PERSON'S COMPUTER, COMPUTER SYSTEM, ELECTRONIC DEVICE, OR COMPUTER CREDENTIALS WITHOUT PERMISSION OR  
16 CONSENT FOR THE PURPOSES OF:

17 (A) RESPONDING TO A NONPAYMENT OR A VIOLATION OF THE TERMS OF A LEGAL CONTRACT BETWEEN THE  
18 PERSONS;

19 (B)(A) COMPLYING WITH A COURT ORDER OR A WARRANT FROM FEDERAL, STATE, OR LOCAL LAW  
20 ENFORCEMENT; OR.

21 (C)(B) USING SECURITY, FRAUD PREVENTION, OR OTHER TOOLS DESIGNED TO ENSURE THE INTEGRITY OF  
22 COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE USER TO OTHER AUTHORIZED SYSTEMS.

23 (4) THIS SECTION DOES NOT APPLY TO AN INDIVIDUAL WHO MODIFIES, ACCESSES, OR DESTROYS THE  
24 INDIVIDUAL'S PERSONAL COMPUTER, COMPUTER NETWORK, COMPUTER SYSTEM, OR ELECTRONIC DEVICE.

25 (5) A PERSON MAY NOT:

26 (A) ENCRYPT OR MODIFY ANOTHER PERSON'S COMPUTER, COMPUTER SYSTEM, OR ELECTRONIC DEVICE;

27 (B) RESTRICT ACCESS TO PERSONAL DATA BY ANY MEANS; OR

