



House of Commons Debates

**THE HONOURABLE JOE VOLPE, P.C., M.P.
INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING OF BILL C-547
AN ACT TO AMEND THE CRIMINAL CODE (ARREST BY OWNER)
THURSDAY, JUNE 16, 2010**

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to introduce a bill that would amend Section 494(2) of the Criminal Code where a citizen's arrest is only permissible if a perpetrator is in the process of committing a crime, a very short and often impractical window, even if the proprietor knows the individual, saw the individual and the perpetrator has already committed the act.

Imagine being a homeowner witnessing an individual vandalizing their home or property. Under the current act, they have no legal right to detain the perpetrator because by the time they reach him the act has already been committed.

Take for example, the shop owner who has been repeatedly robbed by a known career criminal, and yet one day, an hour after stealing something from his store, the criminal comes back for more. The shop owner cannot capture him and call the police. Under the current law they would be charged with assault, forcible confinement and thrown into jail.

When just such an incident occurred last year in Toronto's Chinatown, the Minister of Immigration vowed to change the law, as did the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice. A year later all they have delivered is false hope and disappointment.

Our laws should attack criminals, not the victims. Here is my solution in this bill. Now it is up to the Conservative government, so I ask: Are the Conservatives going to stand up for victims or aid criminals?