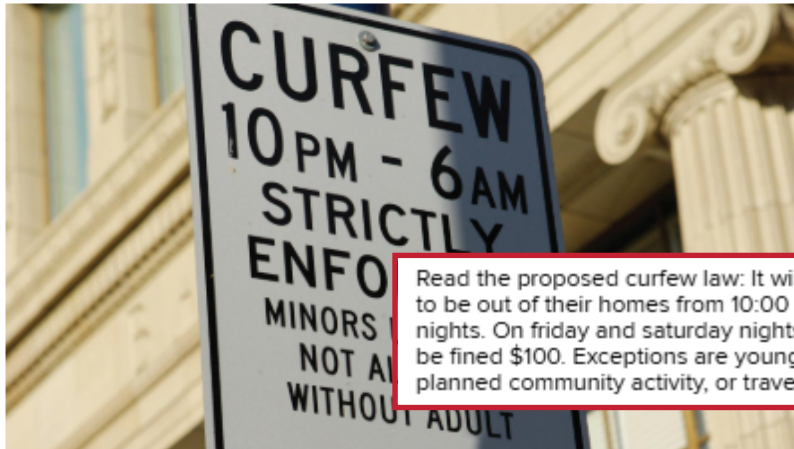


Street Law: A Course in Practical Law (11<sup>th</sup> ed.)

## TAKING ACTION

**Hearing on a Curfew for Teens**

As communities have become concerned about violence by and against young people, teen curfew laws have become more common. Some people welcome the idea of such curfews. Others feel they violate the rights of teens and are unevenly enforced.



Read the proposed curfew law: It will be an offense for persons under the age of 18 to be out of their homes from 10:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. Sunday through thursday nights. On friday and saturday nights the curfew shall begin at midnight. Violators will be fined \$100. Exceptions are young people chaperoned by adults, attending a planned community activity, or traveling to or from work.

## ▲ A curfew reminder

After reading the law, identify who in the community is likely to oppose the law. Who is likely to support the law? Then divide into six groups:

- **Group one is the city council.** You will conduct a hearing and decide whether to enact the law, change it, or not act on it, based on the testimony you hear from the community.
- **Group two is the police department.** Your group opposes the law and will testify against it. You believe the curfew will require too much time and energy to enforce and that existing laws are sufficient to combat drug abuse, violence, and other problems.
- **Group three is “Families Against Violence.”** Your group supports the law and will testify in favor of it. Parents and students in your group believe the curfew will reduce drug sales and use, help parents with out-of-control children, and promote family communication about following rules.
- **Group four is the local merchants association.** Your group opposes the law and will testify against it. Teens are important customers—and employees—at local stores, restaurants, and movie theaters, and the merchants believe the curfew will harm business.
- **Group five is the school board.** Your group supports the law and will testify in favor of it. The board members believe that students should be home doing their homework and preparing for the next school day.
- **Group six is comprised of teenagers.** Your group will testify against the proposed law and argue that it is not fair to treat teens as either criminals or irresponsible members of the community.