

5585

Sponsor(s): Senators West, Stratton, McCaslin and Saling

Brief Description: Establishing a license to sell liquor in motels.

SB 5585 - DIGEST

(DIGEST AS PASSED LEGISLATURE)

Designates a class M license to sell liquor in motels.

Provides that a license may not be issued to a motel offering rooms to its guests on an hourly basis.

Establishes the requirements for issuance of the license.

VETO MESSAGE ON SB 5585

May 21, 1991

To the Honorable, the Senate
of the State of Washington
Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am returning herewith, without my approval, Senate Bill No. 5585, entitled:

"AN ACT Relating to licenses to sell liquor in motels."

This bill creates a Class M liquor license that would permit small motels with three or more rooms to sell hard liquor, beer, and wine in locked honor bars located in the guest rooms. The purpose of this legislation is to provide clientele of small motels with the same in-room liquor sales amenities that large hotels provide their guests under a Class H license.

While the bill may provide convenience to some motel patrons, the potential problems it creates far outweigh its benefits. For example, the bill would expand opportunities for unsupervised access to alcohol by minors by enabling up to 1,200 small motels to sell liquor, beer, and wine in their rooms. This is an outcome that we cannot afford, given the severe problems our young people are having with alcohol consumption.

The bill also violates a long-established legal precedent in this state regarding alcohol beverage control. It permits the sale of liquor in establishments without restaurant food sales. The snacks that would be provided in the honor bars are not a sufficient substitute for normal food sales.

And finally, if only one-half of the small motels become licensees, the Liquor Control Board would be faced with 600 new retail liquor outlets requiring regulation and enforcement. Without additional funding and personnel, which is very uncertain at this stage in the budget process, this would be an unreasonable burden to place on an already over-burdened enforcement staff. Even if I agreed with the public policy of expanding liquor sales to small motels, it would be very risky for the state to assume this substantial regulatory responsibility without assurance of proper funding.

For these reasons, I have vetoed Senate Bill No. 5585 in its entirety.

Respectfully submitted,

Booth Gardner
Governor