

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 2531

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As Reported By House Committee On:  
Commerce & Labor

**Title:** An act relating to signage concerning alcoholic beverages.

**Brief Description:** Requiring warning notices where alcoholic beverages are sold or consumed.

**Sponsors:** Representative Karahalios.

**Brief History:**

Reported by House Committee on:  
Commerce & Labor, February 4, 1994, DP.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE & LABOR

**Majority Report:** Do pass. Signed by 6 members:  
Representatives Heavey, Chair; G. Cole, Vice Chair;  
Chandler, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Conway; King  
and Veloria.

**Minority Report:** Do not pass. Signed by 3 members:  
Representatives Lisk, Ranking Minority Member; Horn and  
Springer.

**Staff:** Jim Kelley (786-7166).

**Background:** Fetal alcohol syndrome is the third leading cause of mental retardation in the United States. Approximately 145 babies are born in Washington each year with fetal alcohol syndrome. In 1993 the Legislature enacted ESHB 2026, which among other provisions, required the Liquor Control Board to post a notice in each state liquor store that consumption of alcohol shortly before conception or during pregnancy may cause birth defects, including fetal alcohol syndrome and fetal alcohol effects.

**Summary of Bill:** All liquor licensees are required to post warning notices stating that consumption of alcohol shortly before conception or during pregnancy may cause birth defects, including fetal alcohol syndrome and fetal alcohol effects.

Establishments licensed to sell liquor for consumption on premises are required to post the notice at the entrance to

the place where consumption is allowed. For establishments licensed to sell alcohol for consumption off the premises, the notice is to be posted where the selection of the beverage occurs.

The board is to adopt rules determining sign placement, sign size, print size, typeface and enforcement. The board is to supply the signs and charge liquor suppliers for the cost of design, production, distribution and replacement of signs.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested January 25, 1994.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Testimony For:** This is part of the ongoing alcohol awareness program within the Liquor Control Board. A similar law has worked well in California. This bill provides a simple way to decrease societal health care costs. The board is prepared to do this by rule because it is a very important concern.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Witnesses:** (In favor) Representative Sue Karahalios, prime sponsor; and Carter Mitchell, Liquor Control Board.