

HOUSE BILL ANALYSIS

SB 5338

Brief Description: Allowing restricted use of spirituous liquor at no charge.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Commerce & Labor (originally by Senators Horn, Heavey, and Schow)

Hearing: March 26, 1997

BACKGROUND:

Historically, the state of Washington has prohibited certain business practices between manufacturers and wholesalers of alcoholic beverages and retailers who sell the product to the public. During the past 20 years, a number of exceptions have been granted including the ability to provide samples of beer and wine under certain circumstances.

A brewer, winery, or beer or wine wholesaler is permitted to furnish samples of beer or wine to an authorized licensee for the purposes of negotiating a sale of the product. These beer and wine manufacturers and wholesalers are also allowed to provide free samples of beer or wine to licensees and their employees for the purposes of instructing them on the history, nature, values, and characteristics of beer or wine. In addition, beer and wine manufacturers are permitted to conduct educational activities for and provide free samples of beer and wine to consumers of retail licensees.

Current law prohibits distillers from conducting any of these activities and providing free samples of spirituous liquors in the course of such activities.

SUMMARY OF BILL:

Distillers are permitted to furnish samples of spirituous liquor to authorized licensees and their employees when negotiating a sale and instructing licensees and their employees regarding the history, nature, values, and characteristics of spirituous liquor. Distillers are also permitted to conduct educational activities for and provide free samples of liquor to consumers on the premises of retail liquor licensees.

RULES AUTHORITY: The bill does not contain provisions addressing the rule-making powers of an agency.

FISCAL NOTE: Not requested.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.