

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1866

As Reported by House Committee On:

Commerce & Labor

Title: An act relating to the merchandising of beer and wine by employees between the ages of eighteen and twenty-one on or about a licensee's premises.

Brief Description: Allowing certain employees to handle beer or wine.

Sponsors: Representatives B. Chandler, Wood, Conway and Clements.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Commerce & Labor: 2/23/01, 2/27/01 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Expresses the intent of the Legislature to enact legislation dealing with the merchandising of beer and wine by employees between the ages of 18 and 21 on or about a licensee's premises.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE & LABOR

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives Clements, Republican Co-Chair; Conway, Democratic Co-Chair; B. Chandler, Republican Vice Chair; Wood, Democratic Vice Chair; Hunt, Kenney, Lisk and McMorris.

Staff: Christopher Waraksa (786-5793); Sydney Forrester (786-7120).

Background:

Minors are prohibited from consuming or possessing alcohol and restricted from working or entering areas where alcohol is served. There are several employment exceptions to these restrictions. For example, minors 18 to 21 may be employed to work as professional musicians or to perform janitorial services in otherwise off-limit locations. Police officers between the ages of 18 and 21 may enter otherwise off-limit locations in the line of duty. Licensed minors aged 18 to 21 may handle and sell alcohol in restaurants, snack bars, and private clubs, but not in bars, cocktail lounges or other areas

established as off-limits by the Washington State Liquor Control Board. These exceptions do not specifically require supervision by adults aged 21 or older.

In other circumstances, minors aged 18 to 21 must be supervised when they work with alcohol. Minor employees aged 18 to 21 of grocery stores or wine and beer specialty shops may sell and handle beer or wine but an adult aged 21 or older must supervise sales of alcohol on the premises. Also, minors aged 18 to 21 who are employees of nonretail licensees (wholesalers, manufacturers, breweries, and wineries) may stock, handle, and merchandise beer and wine for their employer but only on and around the nonretail premises, and only so long as an adult aged 21 or older is supervising.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

The substitute bill declares that it is the intent of the Legislature to enact legislation dealing with the merchandising of beer and wine by employees between the ages of 18 and 21 on or about a licensee's premises.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The original bill provides an exception to the prohibition on minors possessing liquor. It permits minor employees of nonretail class liquor licensees between the ages of 18 and 21 to stock, merchandise, and handle beer and wine on the premises of a grocery store or a wine and/or beer specialty store so long as an adult employee of the retailer supervises the minors. The substitute bill provides only that it is the intent of the Legislature to enact legislation dealing with the merchandising of beer and wine by employees between the ages of 18 and 21 on or about a licensee's premises.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: The bill makes legal what has been common practice for beer and wine distributors since the 1970s. It harmonizes those exceptions in the law which already permit employees of nonretail licensees between the ages of 18 and 21 to stock, merchandise, and handle beer on the nonretail licensee's premises. A similar provision allows employees of grocery stores and wine and/or beer specialty shops between the ages of 18 and 21 to sell, stock, and handle beer and wine on the retail licensee's premises. The distributors depend on their merchandisers between the ages of 18 and 21

to rotate and manage their product in the retail stores.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Phil Wayt and Fred Beuegni, Washington Beer and Wine Wholesalers Association; Rick Garza, Washington State Liquor Control Board; and Joe Daniels, United Food and Commercial Workers.