

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6085

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Labor, Commerce & Financial Institutions, January 29, 2002

Title: An act relating to state certification and training for liquor control board officers.

Brief Description: Providing for state certification and training for liquor control board officers.

Sponsors: Senators Gardner and Hargrove.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Labor, Commerce & Financial Institutions: 1/17/02, 1/29/02 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR, COMMERCE & FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6085 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Prentice, Chair; Keiser, Vice Chair; Benton, Fairley, Franklin, Gardner, Hochstatter, Honeyford, Rasmussen, Regala and Winsley.

Staff: David Cheal (786-7576)

Background: The Liquor Control Board appoints enforcement officers to enforce the laws relating to the manufacture, importation, transportation, possession, distribution, and sale of liquor. These officers do not have law enforcement authority with respect to the criminal code or motor vehicle operation. Because liquor control officers have some of the appearance of law enforcement officers, i.e., wearing a badge and carrying a weapon, citizens may expect them to act in that capacity when they are present during the commission of a crime or where it appears that a crime is about to be committed.

Liquor control officers receive specialized training on the enforcement of liquor laws, but do not receive general law enforcement training.

Summary of Substitute Bill: Liquor enforcement officers employed on or after the effective date must participate in basic law enforcement training provided by the Criminal Justice Training Commission prior to the commencement of their enforcement duties. Liquor enforcement officers employed prior to the effective date must receive basic law enforcement training within a timetable prescribed by the Liquor Control Board.

Liquor control officers who have completed the basic law enforcement training have authority to make arrests for violations of the criminal code committed in their presence while they are performing their liquor enforcement duties.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The substitute bill includes an express grant of authority to make arrests for violations of criminal laws of the state. The distinction between training programs for new and current liquor enforcement officers is removed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 14, 2002.

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

Testimony For: Liquor enforcement officers often encounter violations of the criminal code while on duty performing their liquor enforcement duties. Because they have some of the appearance of law enforcement officers, the public expects them to act. In many rural areas it is not practical to call the sheriff to deal with a crime in progress. With proper training, liquor enforcement officers could make a significant contribution to public safety.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Blair Smith, liquor/tobacco enforcement officer/citizen (pro); Justin Nordhorn, liquor/tobacco enforcement officer/citizen (pro); Rick Phillip, WSLCB (neutral); Sharon Tolton, Criminal Justice Training Commission; Lynn McKinnon, WPEA (pro).