

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5263

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Commerce & Trade, January 31, 2003

Title: An act relating to the catering of alcoholic beverages at special events by nonprofit organizations.

Brief Description: Concerning the catering of alcoholic beverages at special events by nonprofit organizations.

Sponsors: Senators Honeyford and McAuliffe.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Commerce & Trade: 1/29/03, 1/31/03 [DPS]

SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE & TRADE

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5263 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Honeyford, Chair; Franklin, Keiser and Mulliken.

Staff: John Dziedzic (786-7784)

Background: A "caterer's endorsement" allows Liquor Control Board-licensed taverns, restaurants and other businesses to sell spirits and/or beer and wine for consumption at specified off-premise locations for "special occasions." Without the endorsement, liquor may be sold for consumption only at the licensee's location.

The "privilege of selling and serving liquor under such endorsement" is currently "limited to members and guests" of the sponsor of the "special occasion." The sponsor is required to be a "society or organization," as defined by RCW 66.24.375: a nonprofit "charitable, religious, social, political, educational, civic, fraternal, athletic or benevolent" group. Current law also provides that "if attendance at the function will be limited to members and invited guests" of the sponsor, the sponsor does not need to meet the definition found in RCW 66.24.375.

Summary of Substitute Bill: If liquor is sold at a special event under a "caterer's endorsement," whether the sponsor of the event needs to be a nonprofit organization depends on whether the event is "open to the public" or "limited to members or invited guests."

If the event is "open to the public," the special event sponsor must be a nonprofit "society or organization," as defined by RCW 66.24.375. If the event is "limited to members or invited guests" of the sponsor, the sponsor does not need to meet the definition found in RCW 66.24.375.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The substitute bill contains technical amendments that (a) make internal cross-references to definition of "societies and organizations," and (b) contrast circumstances requiring "special occasion" licenses vs. catered events routinely sponsored by recognized nonprofit "societies and organizations."

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: Existing statute has caused confusion about when or whether a caterer can sell spirits, and/or beer and wine at events sponsored by other than "societies and organizations."

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Michael Transue, Washington Restaurant Association.; Jean Leonard, Washington State Arts Alliance; Becky Bogard, Washington State Sports & Entertainment Facilities Operators Association.