

FINAL BILL REPORT

SSB 5156

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Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Concerning airport lounges under the alcohol beverage control act.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Labor, Commerce & Consumer Protection (originally sponsored by Senators Kohl-Welles, King, Keiser, Delvin and Conway).

Senate Committee on Labor, Commerce & Consumer Protection
House Committee on State Government & Tribal Affairs

Background: Current law permits retail licensed premises which sell liquor by the drink (licensed spirits, beer and wine restaurants, private clubs, hotels, nightclubs and sport entertainment facilities) to purchase liquor from the Liquor Control Board at a discount from the set retail price. They are required to have servers with a valid class 12 or class 13 permit. License fees and penalties from retail licensed premises are disbursed according to state law by the Liquor Control Board.

Summary: A new retail license is created to allow VIP airport lounge operators to sell or provide spirits, wine, and beer for on-premises consumption. A VIP airport lounge is an establishment in an international airport located beyond security checkpoints. An operator can be an airline, port district or other entity that is accountable for legal compliance with state laws relating to alcohol, holds the applicable license, and is the contact for licensing and enforcement. Access to a VIP airport lounge is controlled by the operator and generally limited to: ticketed airline passengers of any age; qualified members or guests of loyalty incentive programs; members or guests of enhanced amenities programs; passengers or airline employees issued a pass by the airline for access; and airport or airline employees, government officials, and attendees of airport authority or airline business promotions.

The license allows the operator to purchase spirits from the board, and beer and wine at retail outlets or from the manufacturer or distributor. The VIP airport lounge operator may only serve liquor from a service bar. A service bar is a work station primarily used to prepare and sell alcoholic beverages that are picked up by customers. Customers are not permitted to sit and consume food or alcohol at a service bar. Servers must have a valid permit. The annual licensing fee for a VIP Airport Lounge is \$2,000. The VIP airport lounge operator license is added to the list of retailer licenses in which an industry member – manufacturer, distributor, and importer – may own an interest under a tied house law.

Votes on Final Passage:

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Senate	41	4	
House	91	5	(House amended)
Senate	42	6	(Senate concurred)

Effective: July 22, 2011.