

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1009

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Commerce & Labor, April 1, 2013

Title: An act relating to liquor self-checkout machines.

Brief Description: Concerning liquor self-checkout machines.

Sponsors: House Committee on Government Accountability & Oversight (originally sponsored by Representatives Hunt, Appleton, McCoy and Johnson).

Brief History: Passed House: 2/25/13, 92-0.

Committee Activity: Commerce & Labor: 3/29/13, 4/01/13 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE & LABOR

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Holmquist Newbry, Chair; Braun, Vice Chair; Conway, Ranking Member; Hasegawa, Hewitt, Keiser and King.

Staff: Edith Rice (786-7444)

Background: Large grocery stores gained the ability to sell spirits at retail when the sale of spirits in Washington State became privatized in December 2011. These same grocery stores were already selling beer and wine. Many of these retail businesses utilize self-checkout systems that allow customers to scan and bag items themselves. Typically a store employee is available to assist customers or finalize the transaction.

Presently, Washington has no statutes regulating the use of such self-checkout systems with respect to the purchase of alcoholic beverages.

Summary of Bill: A retailer can sell liquor through the use of self-checkout registers provided that certain requirements are met. The self-checkout register must be programmed to automatically halt any transaction involving the sale of liquor, until an employee can verify the age of the purchaser with acceptable identification. If the purchaser cannot provide proper identification satisfying the age requirement, then the purchase must be refused and the transaction voided.

Appropriation: None.

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.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: I have personal experience with this issue. Some kind of safety measure is necessary. Although we were originally opposed to this concept, we agree that the checkout machines should lock up. We checked with the Liquor Control Board and they report no problems with self-checkout counters.

OTHER: We can do this and support the bill in its current form. We do not think this bill goes far enough. Spirits sales bring on a whole different level of theft and scams. There should be one-on-one contact with clerks to check I.D. Currently there is one checker assigned to eight self-checkout stands. This creates an increased risk of human error and results in job loss.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Hunt prime sponsor; Derek Franklin, WA Assn. for Substance Abuse and Violence Prevention; Holly Chisa, NW Grocery Assn.

OTHER: Mark Johnson, WA Retail Assn.; Sharon Ness, Joe Mizrahi, United Food and Commercial Workers Union.