

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESHB 2680

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Commerce & Labor, February 28, 2014

Title: An act relating to liquor catering.

Brief Description: Establishing a caterer's license to sell spirits, beer, and wine.

Sponsors: House Committee on Government Accountability & Oversight (originally sponsored by Representatives Springer, Haler, Goodman and Freeman).

Brief History: Passed House: 2/12/14, 95-2.

Committee Activity: Commerce & Labor: 2/21/14, 2/28/14 [DP-WM, DNP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE & LABOR

Majority Report: Do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Braun, Vice Chair; Conway, Ranking Member; Hasegawa, Hewitt, King and Kohl-Welles.

Minority Report: Do not pass.

Signed by Senator Holmquist Newbry, Chair.

Staff: Edith Rice (786-7444)

Background: The Liquor Control Board (LCB) may issue a caterer's endorsement to a restaurant licensee authorized to sell beer, wine, and spirits. The caterer's endorsement allows the restaurant to remove liquor from the restaurant premises for the sale to, and use by, customers at a catered event taking place on a specified date. If the event is open to the public, it must be sponsored by specified categories of nonprofit societies or organizations. If attendance at the event is limited to members or invited guests of the sponsoring individual, society, or organization, the requirement that the sponsor must be a specified type of society or organization is waived. The cost of the restaurant caterer's endorsement is \$350.

The holder of a restaurant license with a catering endorsement must, if requested by LCB, notify LCB of the date, time, place, and location of any catered event. Upon request, the licensee must provide to LCB all necessary or requested information concerning the society or organization that will be holding the function at which the endorsed license will be utilized.

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.

Summary of Bill: LCB is authorized to issue a caterer's license to sell spirits, beer, and wine by the individual serving for consumption on the premises at an event location that is either owned, leased, or operated either by the caterer or the sponsor of the event for which catering services are being provided. If the catered event is open to the public, it must be sponsored by a nonprofit society or organization that is operated for charitable, religious, social, political, educational, civic, fraternal, athletic, or benevolent purposes. If attendance at the event is limited to members or invited guests of the sponsoring organization, the requirement that the sponsor must be a specified type of society or organization is waived. The licensee must serve food as required by rules of LCB.

The annual fee is \$200 for the beer license, \$200 for the wine license, or \$400 for a combination beer and wine license. The annual fee for a combined beer, wine, and spirits license is \$1,000.

The date, time, place, and location of any catered event at which liquor will be served, sold, or consumed must be reported to LCB.

Employees of a business holding a catering license who are at least 18 years of age may take orders for, serve, and sell liquor in any part of the licensed premises except those areas that are classified as off limits to persons under 21 years of age, e.g., cocktail lounges, bars, etc.

The licensee is responsible for all sales, service, and consumption of alcohol at the location of the catered event.

Licensees are prohibited from catering events at locations or premises that are already licensed to sell liquor under chapter 66.24 RCW.

Employees of licensed caterers who prepare, mix, or serve alcohol at catered events must have a legal permit authorizing them to do so.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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: Current law does not allow for caterers to obtain a liquor permit. This is necessary for many of the events they are hired for. This will create more jobs. Clients want this service. This is what restaurants do, and this will level the playing field.

Persons Testifying: PRO: John Bagge, J Bagge Co. dba Twelve Baskets Catering; Becky Bogard, Seattle Theatre Group; Julia Gorton, WA Restaurant Assn.