

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1457

As Reported by House Committee On:
Commerce & Gaming

Title: An act relating to authorizing sixteen and seventeen year old store employees to handle liquor.

Brief Description: Authorizing sixteen and seventeen year old store employees to handle liquor.

Sponsors: Representatives Springer, Vick, Reykdal and Scott.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Commerce & Gaming: 1/27/15, 2/16/15 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Authorizes employers holding grocery store and beer and/or wine specialty shop licenses issued by the Liquor Control Board to allow employees between 16 and 17 years of age to handle liquor for the sole purpose of providing direct assistance to an individual customer making a liquor purchase.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE & GAMING

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 7 members: Representatives Hurst, Chair; Condotta, Ranking Minority Member; Holy, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Blake, Kirby, Scott and Vick.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 1 member: Representative Moscoso.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 1 member: Representative Wylie, Vice Chair.

Staff: Thamas Osborn (786-7129).

Background:

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.

Employers holding grocery store or beer and/or wine specialty shop licenses from the Liquor Control Board (LCB) may allow their employees between the ages of 18 and 21 to sell, stock, and handle liquor in or adjacent to the licensed premises, provided adult staff above 21 years of age are present in order to supervise the sale of liquor.

Employees under 21 years of age may make deliveries of beer and/or wine purchased from such licensees, provided delivery is made to cars of customers parked adjacent to such licensed premises and the underage employee is accompanied by the purchaser.

Summary of Bill:

Grocery store and beer and/or wine specialty shop licensees may allow employees between 16 and 17 years of age to handle liquor for the sole purpose of providing direct assistance to an individual customer making a liquor purchase. "Assistance" is defined to mean:

- removal of liquor from a shelf, cabinet, or other display area in order to transfer it to the possession of a customer;
- participating in the bagging or packaging of the liquor during the checkout process; and
- transferring the liquor from the licensee's premises to the motor vehicle of the purchaser, provided the underage employee is accompanied by the purchaser.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This bill was requested by the LCB to address a situation that has been going on in grocery stores for years: namely, 16- and 17-year-old store employees briefly handling liquor products in the course of assisting customers with liquor purchases. Under current law, 16- and 17-year-old employees are prohibited from handling liquor in any fashion, which prevents them from assisting customers, bagging grocery purchases that include liquor, or helping with carry-outs. This bill, if passed, would allow such customer assistance. This is particularly important now that spirits are often displayed in locked cabinets that can't be accessed by a customer without employee assistance.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Springer, prime sponsor; Amy Brackenbury, Washington Food Industry Association; and Holly Chisa, Northwest Grocery Association.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.