

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1478

As Reported by House Committee On: Commerce & Gaming

Title: An act relating to allowing additional liquor distributor employees to stock liquor under certain circumstances.

Brief Description: Allowing additional liquor distributor employees to stock liquor under certain circumstances.

Sponsors: Representatives Condotta, Moscoso, Scott and Hurst.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

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

Brief Summary of Bill

- Permits 18- to 21-year-old employees of alcoholic beverage distributors, wholesalers, and manufacturers to handle alcoholic products on both retail and nonretail premises.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE & GAMING

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Hurst, Chair; Wylie, Vice Chair; Condotta, Ranking Minority Member; Holy, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Blake, Kirby, Moscoso, Scott and Vick.

Staff: David Rubenstein (786-7153).

Background:

Possession, consumption, or acquisition of alcohol is generally prohibited for those persons under the age of 21. Certain exceptions have been authorized for employees between the ages of 18 and 21 who work for liquor licensees permitted to sell alcoholic beverages at retail, or retail class licensees. Employees of nonretail class liquor licensees (including distributors, wholesalers, and manufacturers acting as distributors) who are at least 18 years

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old may handle beer and wine on the nonretail premises if a person at least 21 years old supervises.

Summary of Bill:

Employees of a nonretail class licensee who are between 18 and 21 years old may handle any kind of liquor on nonretail premises if supervised by an adult who is at least 21 years old. On retail premises, minor employees of nonretail class licensees may handle liquor if there is an employee of the retail licensee who is at least 21 years old on the premises at the time of the activity. The exception to the general rule prohibiting minors from possessing alcohol is limited to these circumstances, except where otherwise allowed by law.

If a nonretail class licensee's employee violates the law while on retail premises, the violation is the responsibility of the nonretail class licensee. However, a retail licensee and its employees must still comply with the law.

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) Distributor employees provide merchandising services, meaning they stock shelves. All distributor employees performing these services must be at least 21 years old, yet retail employees between 18 and 21 years old are permitted to perform the same tasks. Even distributor employees in that age group may handle liquor in distributor warehouses. This bill would simply allow those employees to perform merchandising services for retailers.

There is a severe problem with youth unemployment in Washington. This bill is a great way to provide youth more opportunities than they currently have, and it gives them a chance to enter the industry.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Condotta, prime sponsor; and Scott Hazlegrove, Washington Beer and Wine Distributors Association.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.