

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## ESB 5504

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Synopsis as Enacted

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

**Sponsors:** Senators Hewitt and Hasegawa.

**Senate Committee on Commerce & Labor**  
**House Committee on Commerce & Gaming**

**Background:** Minors are prohibited from consuming or possessing alcohol and restricted from working or entering areas where alcohol is served. There are several employment exceptions to these restrictions. For example, minors age 18 to 21 may be on an otherwise off-limit location when they are employed as: (1) professional musicians; (2) janitorial staff; (3) police officers and firefighters who are on the premises in the line of duty; and (4) licensed servers handling and selling alcohol in restaurants, snack bars, and private clubs, but not in bars, cocktail lounges, or other areas established as off-limits by the Liquor Control Board. These exceptions do not specifically require supervision by adults age 21 or older.

In other circumstances, minors must be supervised when they work with alcohol. Minors age 18 to 21 who are employees of grocery stores or wine and beer specialty shops may sell and handle beer or wine, but an adult aged 21 or older must supervise all sales of alcohol on the premises.

Minors age 18 to 21 who are employees of nonretail licensees – wholesalers, manufacturers, breweries, and wineries – may stock, merchandise, and handle beer and wine for their employer but only on and around the nonretail premises, and only when supervised by an adult age 21 or older.

**Summary:** Employees of a nonretail liquor licensee, age 18 to 21, are generally prohibited from handling, transporting, or possessing liquor. An exception is provided for the minors to stock, merchandise, or handle any liquor while: (1) working at the nonretail business if they are supervised by an adult age 21 or older; or (2) working at a retail licensee's premises, except between the hours of 11:00 p.m. and 4:00 a.m., when an adult, employed by the retail licensee, is present at the premises while the work is being performed.

Acts or omissions in violation of the state liquor laws by a nonretail liquor licensee's employee, occurring on the premises of the retail licensee, is the responsibility of the

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nonretail employer. Retail licensee employers are still responsible for any violations by their own employees.

**Votes on Final Passage:**

Senate	46	3
House	95	2

**Effective:** July 24, 2015