

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 1299

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**As Reported by House Committee On:**  
Regulated Substances & Gaming

**Title:** An act relating to workforce development in the beverage alcohol industry.

**Brief Description:** Concerning workforce development in the beverage alcohol industry.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Chambers, Wylie, Robertson, Cheney and Reed.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Regulated Substances & Gaming: 1/23/23, 1/26/23 [DPS].

**Brief Summary of Substitute Bill**

- Allows employees and interns of certain liquor licensees who are between 18 and 21 years of age to engage in the manufacture and production of liquor under specified conditions.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON REGULATED SUBSTANCES & GAMING

**Majority Report:** The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 10 members: Representatives Kloba, Co-Chair; Wylie, Co-Chair; Stearns, Vice Chair; Chambers, Ranking Minority Member; Robertson, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Cheney, Morgan, Orwall, Reeves and Walsh.

**Staff:** Matt Sterling (786-7289).

**Background:**

Under certain specified circumstances, certain liquor licensees may employ interns or employees between the ages of 18 and 21 to hold, handle, transport, or otherwise possess liquor. A non-retail class licensee is permitted to allow an employee between the ages of 18

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and 21 to stock, merchandise, and handle liquor if a person 21 years of age or older is on duty supervising.

A domestic winery licensee may allow employees and interns between 18 and 21 years old to engage in wine production-related work at the domestic winery's licensed location, so long as the intern is enrolled as a student at a community or technical college, regional university, or state university that holds a special permit for this purpose issued by the Liquor and Cannabis Board. The intern must also be enrolled in a required or elective class as part of a culinary, sommelier, wine business, enology, viticulture, wine technology, beer technology, or spirituous technology-related degree program. A domestic winery or non-retail class liquor licensee is solely responsible for any act or omission of their employee or intern that occurs at or on the licensee's premises that violates liquor laws.

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**Summary of Substitute Bill:**

Employees and interns of all liquor licensees with privileges for manufacturing or producing beer, wine, spirits, or any type of liquor who are between 18 and 21 years old may engage in the manufacture and production of liquor at the licensed location under certain circumstances.

The employees and interns of such licensees that are under 21 years of age may only work in the licensee's production facility if there is a person 21 years of age or older that is on duty supervising such activities. Interns of a licensee must be a student at a college or university that holds a special permit as part of a degree program and enrolled in a class as part of a culinary, sommelier, wine business, enology, viticulture, wine technology, beer technology, or spirituous technology-related degree program. An employee under 21 years of age engaging in the manufacture and production of liquor is not authorized to sell or serve liquor.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:**

The substitute bill changes the reference to spirit manufacturing and spirit production to liquor manufacturing and liquor production to clarify that the manufacturing and production of beer and wine is also authorized for interns of a liquor licensee.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) The activities authorized in House Bill 1299 were previously done for the wine industry and should be done for the liquor industry as well. There are students that are able to do this work while they are in a collegiate program, but then once they graduate they are unable to work in the production of liquor. These individuals have been specifically trained to do this manufacturing work and should be able to legally work in these facilities. A similar bill was previously passed out of committee. There is a significant labor shortage and the ability to train and employ a new workforce is essential. There have been zero violations or concerns about these provisions in the wine industry and they have helped alleviate the labor shortage for companies. There are strong protections with the requirement that there is a supervisor who is at least 21 years of age.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** Representative Kelly Chambers, prime sponsor; Josh McDonald, Washington Wine Institute; and Justin Stiefel, Heritage Distilling Company.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.