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**SENATE BILL 5340**

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**State of Washington 69th Legislature 2025 Regular Session**

**By** Senator Fortunato

AN ACT Relating to permanently exempting from sales and use tax bottled water, prepared food, and clothing; amending RCW 82.08.0293; adding a new section to chapter 82.08 RCW; adding a new section to chapter 82.12 RCW; and creating a new section.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

**Sec.**  RCW 82.08.0293 and 2022 c 16 s 152 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) The tax levied by RCW 82.08.020 does not apply to sales of food and food ingredients. "Food and food ingredients" means substances, whether in liquid, concentrated, solid, frozen, dried, or dehydrated form, that are sold for ingestion or chewing by humans and are consumed for their taste or nutritional value. "Food and food ingredients" includes bottled water. "Food and food ingredients" includes "prepared food." "Food and food ingredients" does not include:

(a) "Alcoholic beverages," which means beverages that are suitable for human consumption and contain ((~~one-half of one~~)) 0.5 percent or more of alcohol by volume;

(b) "Tobacco," which means cigarettes, cigars, chewing or pipe tobacco, or any other item that contains tobacco; and

(c) Cannabis, useable cannabis, or cannabis-infused products.

(2) The exemption of "food and food ingredients" provided for in subsection (1) of this section does not apply to ((~~prepared food,~~)) soft drinks((~~, bottled water,~~)) or dietary supplements. The definitions in this subsection apply throughout this section unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(a) "Bottled water" means water that is placed in a safety sealed container or package for human consumption. Bottled water is calorie free and does not contain sweeteners or other additives except that it may contain: (i) Antimicrobial agents; (ii) fluoride; (iii) carbonation; (iv) vitamins, minerals, and electrolytes; (v) oxygen; (vi) preservatives; and (vii) only those flavors, extracts, or essences derived from a spice or fruit. "Bottled water" includes water that is delivered to the buyer in a reusable container that is not sold with the water.

(b) "Dietary supplement" means any product, other than tobacco, intended to supplement the diet that:

(i) Contains one or more of the following dietary ingredients:

(A) A vitamin;

(B) A mineral;

(C) An herb or other botanical;

(D) An amino acid;

(E) A dietary substance for use by humans to supplement the diet by increasing the total dietary intake; or

(F) A concentrate, metabolite, constituent, extract, or combination of any ingredient described in this subsection;

(ii) Is intended for ingestion in tablet, capsule, powder, softgel, gelcap, or liquid form, or if not intended for ingestion in such form, is not represented as conventional food and is not represented for use as a sole item of a meal or of the diet; and

(iii) Is required to be labeled as a dietary supplement, identifiable by the "supplement facts" box found on the label as required pursuant to 21 C.F.R. Sec. 101.36, as amended or renumbered as of January 1, 2003.

(c)(i) "Prepared food" means:

(A) Food sold in a heated state or heated by the seller;

(B) Food sold with eating utensils provided by the seller, including plates, knives, forks, spoons, glasses, cups, napkins, or straws. A plate does not include a container or packaging used to transport the food; or

(C) Two or more food ingredients mixed or combined by the seller for sale as a single item, except:

(I) Food that is only cut, repackaged, or pasteurized by the seller; or

(II) Raw eggs, fish, meat, poultry, and foods containing these raw animal foods requiring cooking by the consumer as recommended by the federal food and drug administration in chapter 3, part 401.11 of The Food Code, published by the food and drug administration, as amended or renumbered as of January 1, 2003, so as to prevent foodborne illness.

(ii) Food is "sold with eating utensils provided by the seller" if:

(A) The seller's customary practice for that item is to physically deliver or hand a utensil to the customer with the food or food ingredient as part of the sales transaction. If the food or food ingredient is prepackaged with a utensil, the seller is considered to have physically delivered a utensil to the customer unless the food and utensil are prepackaged together by a food manufacturer classified under sector 311 of the North American industry classification system (NAICS);

(B) A plate, glass, cup, or bowl is necessary to receive the food or food ingredient, and the seller makes those utensils available to its customers; or

(C)(I) The seller makes utensils available to its customers, and the seller has more than ((~~seventy-five~~)) 75 percent prepared food sales. For purposes of this subsection (2)(c)(ii)(C), a seller has more than ((~~seventy-five~~)) 75 percent prepared food sales if the seller's gross retail sales of prepared food under (c)(i)(A), (c)(i)(C), and (c)(ii)(B) of this subsection equal more than ((~~seventy-five~~)) 75 percent of the seller's gross retail sales of all food and food ingredients, including prepared food, soft drinks, and dietary supplements.

(II) However, even if a seller has more than ((~~seventy-five~~)) 75 percent prepared food sales, four servings or more of food or food ingredients packaged for sale as a single item and sold for a single price are not "sold with utensils provided by the seller" unless the seller's customary practice for the package is to physically hand or otherwise deliver a utensil to the customer as part of the sales transaction. Whenever available, the number of servings included in a package of food or food ingredients must be determined based on the manufacturer's product label. If no label is available, the seller must reasonably determine the number of servings.

(III) The seller must determine a single prepared food sales percentage annually for all the seller's establishments in the state based on the prior year of sales. The seller may elect to determine its prepared food sales percentage based either on the prior calendar year or on the prior fiscal year. A seller may not change its elected method for determining its prepared food percentage without the written consent of the department. The seller must determine its annual prepared food sales percentage as soon as possible after accounting records are available, but in no event later than ((~~ninety~~)) 90 days after the beginning of the seller's calendar or fiscal year. A seller may make a good faith estimate of its first annual prepared food sales percentage if the seller's records for the prior year are not sufficient to allow the seller to calculate the prepared food sales percentage. The seller must adjust its good faith estimate prospectively if its relative sales of prepared foods in the first ((~~ninety~~)) 90 days of operation materially depart from the seller's estimate.

(iii) "Prepared food" ((~~does not~~)) includes the following items((~~, if sold without eating utensils provided by the seller~~)):

(A) Food sold by a seller whose proper primary NAICS classification is manufacturing in sector 311, except subsector 3118 (bakeries), as provided in the "North American industry classification system—United States, 2002";

(B) Food sold in an unheated state by weight or volume as a single item; or

(C) Bakery items. The term "bakery items" includes bread, rolls, buns, biscuits, bagels, croissants, pastries, donuts, Danish, cakes, tortes, pies, tarts, muffins, bars, cookies, or tortillas.

(d) "Soft drinks" means nonalcoholic beverages that contain natural or artificial sweeteners. Soft drinks do not include beverages that contain: Milk or milk products; soy, rice, or similar milk substitutes; or greater than ((~~fifty~~)) 50 percent of vegetable or fruit juice by volume.

(3) Notwithstanding anything in this section to the contrary, the exemption of "food and food ingredients" provided in this section applies to food and food ingredients that are furnished, prepared, or served as meals:

(a) Under a state administered nutrition program for the aged as provided for in the older Americans act (P.L. 95-478 Title III) and RCW 74.38.040(6);

(b) That are provided to senior citizens, individuals with disabilities, or low-income persons by a nonprofit organization organized under chapter 24.03A or 24.12 RCW; or

(c) That are provided to residents, ((~~sixty-two~~)) 62 years of age or older, of a qualified low-income senior housing facility by the lessor or operator of the facility. The sale of a meal that is billed to both spouses of a marital community or both domestic partners of a domestic partnership meets the age requirement in this subsection (3)(c) if at least one of the spouses or domestic partners is at least ((~~sixty-two~~)) 62 years of age. For purposes of this subsection, "qualified low-income senior housing facility" means a facility:

(i) That meets the definition of a qualified low-income housing project under 26 U.S.C. Sec. 42 of the federal internal revenue code, as existing on August 1, 2009;

(ii) That has been partially funded under 42 U.S.C. Sec. 1485; and

(iii) For which the lessor or operator has at any time been entitled to claim a federal income tax credit under 26 U.S.C. Sec. 42 of the federal internal revenue code.

(4)(a) Subsection (1) of this section notwithstanding, the retail sale of food and food ingredients is subject to sales tax under RCW 82.08.020 if the food and food ingredients are sold through a vending machine. Except as provided in (b) of this subsection, the selling price of food and food ingredients sold through a vending machine for purposes of RCW 82.08.020 is ((~~fifty-seven~~)) 57 percent of the gross receipts.

(b) For soft drinks, bottled water, and hot prepared food and food ingredients, other than food and food ingredients which are heated after they have been dispensed from the vending machine, the selling price is the total gross receipts of such sales divided by the sum of one plus the sales tax rate expressed as a decimal.

(c) For tax collected under this subsection (4), the requirements that the tax be collected from the buyer and that the amount of tax be stated as a separate item are waived.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 82.08 RCW to read as follows:

(1)The tax levied by RCW 82.08.020 does not apply to sales of clothing and footwear for human use.

(2) For the purposes of this section:

(a)(i) "Clothing" means all human wearing apparel suitable for general use. "Clothing" also includes:

(A) Protective equipment necessary for the daily work of the user; and

(B) Sewing equipment and supplies.

(ii) "Clothing" does not include: Clothing accessories or equipment, fur clothing, and sport or recreational equipment.

(b) "Clothing accessories or equipment" means incidental items worn on the person or in conjunction with clothing that are sold separately.

(c) "Fur clothing" means clothing that is required to be labeled as a fur product under 15 U.S.C. Sec. 69, and the value of the fur components in the product is more than three times the value of the next most valuable tangible component. For the purposes of this subsection, "fur" means any animal skin or part thereof with hair, fleece, or fur fibers attached thereto, either in its raw or processed state, but does not include such skins that have been converted into leather or suede, or which in processing the hair, fleece, or fur fiber has been completely removed.

(d) "Protective equipment" means items for human wear and designed as protection of the wearer against injury or disease or as protections against damage or injury of other persons or property but not suitable for general use.

(e) "Sewing equipment and supplies" means sewing materials including, but not limited to: Fabrics, thread, knitting yarn, buttons, and zippers, purchased by noncommercial purchasers for incorporation into clothing as a constituent part thereof.

(f) "Sport or recreational equipment" means items designed for human use and worn in conjunction with an athletic or recreational activity that are not suitable for general use.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 82.12 RCW to read as follows:

(1) The provisions of this chapter do not apply with respect to the use of clothing and footwear for human use.

(2) The definitions in section 2 of this act apply to this section.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  RCW 82.32.805 and 82.32.808 do not apply to this act.

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