

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 5022

As Reported By House Committee On:
Commerce & Labor

Title: An act relating to identification cards for liquor purchases.

Brief Description: Allowing United States military dependents' identification as identification cards for liquor purchases.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Labor, Commerce & Trade (originally sponsored by Senators Fairley and Winsley).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Commerce & Labor: 3/16/95, 3/22/95 [DP].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE & LABOR

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Lisk, Chairman; Hargrove, Vice Chairman; Thompson, Vice Chairman; Romero, Ranking Minority Member; Conway, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Cairnes; Cody; Cole; Fuhrman; Goldsmith and Horn.

Staff: Pam Madson (786-7166).

Background: Any person who purchases alcohol in the state of Washington must be 21 years of age. There are five acceptable types of officially issued identification that can be used as proof of age when purchasing alcohol:

- (1) Liquor control authority card of identification for any state or Canada;
- (2) Driver's license, instruction permit or ID card of any state;
- (3) U.S. active duty military identification;
- (4) Passport; and
- (5) Merchant marine ID card issued by the U.S. Coast Guard.

These types of identification show age, signature and photo of the holder. No other forms of identification including nonactive military personnel identification may be accepted as proof of age by those selling alcohol.

Summary of Bill: United States armed forces identification cards issued to active duty personnel, reservists, retired personnel and military dependents may be accepted as proof of age for the purchase of alcohol.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on March 7, 1995.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: Military bases have a very secure system for issuing identification cards. Spouses of active duty military personnel cannot use their dependents' identification as proof of age when ordering alcohol at restaurants. The only difference between an active military identification card and a dependent's card is the color. Reservists who fought forest fires in Washington during the summer of 1994 were unable to use their military identification to purchase beer at local establishments.

Testimony Against: It is already difficult to educate liquor servers and store clerks on the valid forms of identification for liquor purchases. Current valid identification can be from any of the 50 states. Adding another type of identification would further complicate things. Everyone who is of age to purchase liquor usually possesses a drivers license, which can be used to purchase liquor. Some people allege that it is easy to obtain a dependent identification card without verification. Enforcement officers are concerned about expanding the types of cards because it also expands the ability to use cards illegally.

Testified: (In favor) Senator Fairley, prime sponsor; and Carter Mitchell, Liquor Control Board. (Opposed) Jeanne Reschan.