

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 1847

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Commerce & Labor, March 27, 1997

Title: An act relating to on-premises sales of liquor other than wine by the manufacturer.

Brief Description: Allowing wine manufacturers that manufacture other liquors to sell the manufacturer's liquor products on its licensed premises.

Sponsors: Representatives Honeyford, McMorris and Dunn.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Commerce & Labor: 3/25/97, 3/27/97 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE & LABOR

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Schow, Chair; Horn, Vice Chair; Anderson, Fraser, Heavey and Newhouse.

Staff: Patrick Woods (786-7430)

Background: The retail sale of spirituous liquor by the bottle is controlled by the Liquor Control Board. The board operates liquor stores throughout the state where the public may purchase bottled liquor. In communities where no liquor store is located, the board may appoint liquor vendors who may sell spirituous liquor to the public in the same manner as a state liquor store.

Certain wineries produce a product that is over 24 percent of alcohol by volume making the product a spirituous liquor. The winery is appointed as a liquor vendor allowing it to sell its own product at its licensed premises only.

The Attorney General issued an opinion in February 1996, interpreting the board's authority to appoint wineries as liquor vendors for the sale of their own product on their licensed premises. The Attorney General concluded that the board does not have authority to appoint a winery or a brewery to act as a liquor vendor in this manner. Wine products that qualify as spirituous liquor may not be sold at the winery.

Summary of Bill: The Liquor Control Board may appoint as a liquor vendor, a licensed manufacturer that also manufactures liquor products other than wine, to sell its own liquor products at its licensed location.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: The bill will clarify the Liquor Board's authority to allow local wineries to sell their own liquor products, i.e., Ste Michelle's Whidbey liqueur.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Victoria Chiechi, Washington Wine Institute; Carter Mitchell, Liquor Control Board.