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SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1359

State of Washington 67th Legislature 2021 Regular Session

By House Commerce & Gaming (originally sponsored by Representatives Stonier, MacEwen, Robertson, Shewmake, Ormsby, and Macri)

READ FIRST TIME 02/09/21.

AN ACT Relating to temporarily reducing liquor license fees; amending RCW 66.24.420, 66.24.590, 66.24.600, 66.24.655, 66.24.690, 66.24.140, and 66.24.146; creating a new section; providing an effective date; providing an expiration date; and declaring an emergency.

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

7 NEW SECTION. Sec. 1. The legislature finds that operations of in the hospitality industry have been significantly 8 businesses disrupted since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many of these 9 10 businesses, including restaurants, hotels, theaters, caterers, and 11 nightclubs maintain state liquor licenses in order to offer their 12 customers beer, wine, or spirits as products or amenities 13 authorized under the terms of their licenses. However, 14 licensees' businesses were completely or partially closed for much of 15 2020 and continue to be closed or substantially disrupted in 2021. 16 Recognizing many licensees' inability to fully operate and use their 17 license, and the financial hardships faced by many licensees, the 18 legislature intends to provide relief to the hospitality industry by 19 reducing certain liquor license fees in 2021 and 2022.

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- 1 **Sec. 2.** RCW 66.24.420 and 2009 c 271 s 7 are each amended to read as follows:
 - (1) The spirits, beer, and wine restaurant license shall be issued in accordance with the following schedule of annual fees:
 - (a) The annual fee for a spirits, beer, and wine restaurant license shall be graduated according to the dedicated dining area and type of service provided as follows:

8 Less than 50% dedicated dining area ((\$2,000))
9 \$1,000
10 50% or more dedicated dining area ((\$1,600))
11 \$800
12 Service bar only ((\$1,000))
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- (b) The annual fee for the license when issued to any other spirits, beer, and wine restaurant licensee outside of incorporated cities and towns shall be prorated according to the calendar quarters, or portion thereof, during which the licensee is open for business, except in case of suspension or revocation of the license.
- (c) Where the license shall be issued to any corporation, association or person operating a bona fide restaurant in an airport terminal facility providing service to transient passengers with more than one place where liquor is to be dispensed and sold, such license shall be issued upon the payment of the annual fee, which shall be a master license and shall permit such sale within and from one such place. Such license may be extended to additional places on the premises at the discretion of the board and a duplicate license may be issued for each such additional place. The holder of a master license for a restaurant in an airport terminal facility must maintain in a substantial manner at least one place on the premises for preparing, cooking, and serving of complete meals, and such food service shall be available on request in other licensed places on the premises. An additional license fee of twenty-five percent of the annual master license fee shall be required for such duplicate licenses.
- (d) Where the license shall be issued to any corporation, association, or person operating dining places at a publicly or privately owned civic or convention center with facilities for sports, entertainment, or conventions, or a combination thereof, with

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more than one place where liquor is to be dispensed and sold, such license shall be issued upon the payment of the annual fee, which shall be a master license and shall permit such sale within and from one such place. Such license may be extended to additional places on the premises at the discretion of the board and a duplicate license may be issued for each such additional place. The holder of a master license for a dining place at such a publicly or privately owned civic or convention center must maintain in a substantial manner at least one place on the premises for preparing, cooking, and serving of complete meals, and food service shall be available on request in other licensed places on the premises. An additional license fee of ten dollars shall be required for such duplicate licenses.

- (2) The board, so far as in its judgment is reasonably possible, shall confine spirits, beer, and wine restaurant licenses to the business districts of cities and towns and other communities, and not grant such licenses in residential districts, nor within the immediate vicinity of schools, without being limited in the administration of this subsection to any specific distance requirements.
- (3) The board shall have discretion to issue spirits, beer, and wine restaurant licenses outside of cities and towns in the state of Washington. The purpose of this subsection is to enable the board, in its discretion, to license in areas outside of cities and towns and other communities, establishments which are operated and maintained primarily for the benefit of tourists, vacationers and travelers, and also golf and country clubs, and common carriers operating dining, club and buffet cars, or boats.
- (4) The combined total number of spirits, beer, and wine nightclub licenses, and spirits, beer, and wine restaurant licenses issued in the state of Washington by the board, not including spirits, beer, and wine private club licenses, shall not in the aggregate at any time exceed one license for each one thousand two hundred of population in the state, determined according to the yearly population determination developed by the office of financial management pursuant to RCW 43.62.030.
- (5) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (4) of this section, the board shall refuse a spirits, beer, and wine restaurant license to any applicant if in the opinion of the board the spirits, beer, and wine restaurant licenses already granted for the particular locality are adequate for the reasonable needs of the community.

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(6) (a) The board may issue a caterer's endorsement to this license to allow the licensee to remove the liquor stocks at the licensed premises, for use as liquor for sale and service at event locations at a specified date and, except as provided in subsection (7) of this section, place not currently licensed by the board. If the event is open to the public, it must be sponsored by a society or organization as defined by RCW 66.24.375. If attendance at the event is limited to members or invited guests of the sponsoring individual, society, or organization, the requirement that the sponsor must be a society or organization as defined by RCW 66.24.375 is waived. Cost of the endorsement is three hundred fifty dollars.

- (b) The holder of this license with a catering endorsement shall, if requested by the board, notify the board or its designee of the date, time, place, and location of any catered event. Upon request, the licensee shall provide to the board all necessary or requested information concerning the society or organization that will be holding the function at which the endorsed license will be utilized.
- (c) The holder of this license with a caterer's endorsement may, under conditions established by the board, store liquor on the premises of another not licensed by the board so long as there is a written agreement between the licensee and the other party to provide for ongoing catering services, the agreement contains no exclusivity clauses regarding the alcoholic beverages to be served, and the agreement is filed with the board.
- (d) The holder of this license with a caterer's endorsement may, under conditions established by the board, store liquor on other premises operated by the licensee so long as the other premises are owned or controlled by a leasehold interest by that licensee. A duplicate license may be issued for each additional premises. A license fee of twenty dollars shall be required for such duplicate licenses.
- (7) Licensees under this section that hold a caterer's endorsement are allowed to use this endorsement on a domestic winery premises or on the premises of a passenger vessel and may store liquor at such premises under conditions established by the board under the following conditions:
- (a) Agreements between the domestic winery or passenger vessel, as the case may be, and the retail licensee shall be in writing, contain no exclusivity clauses regarding the alcoholic beverages to be served, and be filed with the board; and

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- 1 (b) The domestic winery or passenger vessel, as the case may be, 2 and the retail licensee shall be separately contracted and 3 compensated by the persons sponsoring the event for their respective 4 services.
- **Sec. 3.** RCW 66.24.590 and 2012 c 2 s 115 are each amended to 6 read as follows:
 - (1) There is a retailer's license to be designated as a hotel license. No license may be issued to a hotel offering rooms to its guests on an hourly basis. Food service provided for room service, banquets or conferences, or restaurant operation under this license must meet the requirements of rules adopted by the board.
 - (2) The hotel license authorizes the licensee to:

- (a) Sell spirituous liquor, beer, and wine, by the individual glass, at retail, for consumption on the premises, including mixed drinks and cocktails compounded and mixed on the premises;
 - (b) Sell, at retail, from locked honor bars, in individual units, spirits not to exceed fifty milliliters, beer in individual units not to exceed twelve ounces, and wine in individual bottles not to exceed three hundred eighty-five milliliters, to registered guests of the hotel for consumption in guest rooms. The licensee must require proof of age from the guest renting a guest room and requesting the use of an honor bar. The guest must also execute an affidavit verifying that no one under twenty-one years of age will have access to the spirits, beer, and wine in the honor bar;
 - (c) Provide without additional charge, to overnight guests, spirits, beer, and wine by the individual serving for on-premises consumption at a specified regular date, time, and place as may be fixed by the board. Self-service by attendees is prohibited;
 - (d) Sell beer, including strong beer, wine, or spirits, in the manufacturer's sealed container or by the individual drink to guests through room service, or through service to occupants of private residential units which are part of the buildings or complex of buildings that include the hotel;
- (e) Sell beer, including strong beer, spirits, or wine, in the manufacturer's sealed container at retail sales locations within the hotel premises;
- 37 (f) Sell beer to a purchaser in a sanitary container brought to 38 the premises by the purchaser or furnished by the licensee and filled

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1 at the tap in the restaurant area by the licensee at the time of 2 sale;

- (g) Sell for on or off-premises consumption, including through room service and service to occupants of private residential units managed by the hotel, wine carrying a label exclusive to the hotel license holder;
- (h) Place in guest rooms at check-in, a complimentary bottle of liquor in a manufacturer-sealed container, and make a reference to this service in promotional material.
- (3) If all or any facilities for alcoholic beverage service and the preparation, cooking, and serving of food are operated under contract or joint venture agreement, the operator may hold a license separate from the license held by the operator of the hotel. Food and beverage inventory used in separate licensed operations at the hotel may not be shared and must be separately owned and stored by the separate licensees.
- (4) All spirits to be sold under this license must be purchased from a spirits retailer or spirits distributor licensee of the board.
- (5) All ((on-premise [on-premises])) on-premises alcoholic beverage service must be done by an alcohol server as defined in RCW 66.20.300 and must comply with RCW 66.20.310.
- (6) (a) The hotel license allows the licensee to remove from the liquor stocks at the licensed premises, liquor for sale and service at event locations at a specified date and place not currently licensed by the board. If the event is open to the public, it must be sponsored by a society or organization as defined by RCW 66.24.375. If attendance at the event is limited to members or invited guests of the sponsoring individual, society, or organization, the requirement that the sponsor must be a society or organization as defined by RCW 66.24.375 is waived.
- (b) The holder of this license must, if requested by the board, notify the board or its designee of the date, time, place, and location of any event. Upon request, the licensee must provide to the board all necessary or requested information concerning the society or organization that will be holding the function at which the endorsed license will be utilized.
- 37 (c) Licensees may cater events on a domestic winery, brewery, or 38 distillery premises.
- 39 (7) The holder of this license or its manager may furnish 40 spirits, beer, or wine to the licensee's employees who are twenty-one

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years of age or older free of charge as may be required for use in 1 2 connection with instruction on spirits, beer, and wine. The instruction may include the history, nature, values, and 3 characteristics of spirits, beer, or wine, the use of wine lists, and 4 the methods of presenting, serving, storing, and handling spirits, 5 6 beer, or wine. The licensee must use the liquor it obtains under its 7 license for the sampling as part of the instruction. The instruction must be given on the premises of the licensee. 8

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- (8) Minors may be allowed in all areas of the hotel where liquor may be consumed; however, the consumption must be incidental to the primary use of the area. These areas include, but are not limited to, tennis courts, hotel lobbies, and swimming pool areas. If an area is not a mixed use area, and is primarily used for alcohol service, the area must be designated and restricted to access by persons of lawful age to purchase liquor.
- 16 (9) The annual fee for this license is $((\frac{\text{two thousand dollars}}))$ 17 $\frac{$1,000}{}$.
- 18 (10) As used in this section, "hotel," "spirits," "beer," and 19 "wine" have the meanings defined in RCW 66.24.410 and 66.04.010.
- 20 **Sec. 4.** RCW 66.24.600 and 2009 c 271 s 1 are each amended to 21 read as follows:
 - (1) There shall be a spirits, beer, and wine nightclub license to sell spirituous liquor by the drink, beer, and wine at retail, for consumption on the licensed premises.
 - (2) The license may be issued only to a person whose business includes the sale and service of alcohol to the person's customers, has food sales and service incidental to the sale and service of alcohol, and has primary business hours between 9:00 p.m. and 2:00 a.m.
- 30 (3) Minors may be allowed on the licensed premises but only in 31 areas where alcohol is not served or consumed.
 - (4) The annual fee for this license is ((two thousand dollars)) \$1,000. The fee for the license shall be reviewed from time to time and set at such a level sufficient to defray the cost of licensing and enforcing this licensing program. The fee shall be fixed by rule adopted by the board in accordance with the provisions of the administrative procedure act, chapter 34.05 RCW.
 - (5) Local governments may petition the board to request that further restrictions be imposed on a spirits, beer, and wine

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- nightclub license in the interest of public safety. Examples of further restrictions a local government may request are: No minors allowed on the entire premises, submitting a security plan, or signing a good neighbor agreement with the local government.
 - (6) The total number of ((spirts [spirits])) spirits, beer, and wine nightclub licenses are subject to the requirements of RCW 66.24.420(4). However, the board shall refuse a spirits, beer, and wine nightclub license to any applicant if the board determines that the spirits, beer, and wine nightclub licenses already granted for the particular locality are adequate for the reasonable needs of the community.
 - (7) The board may adopt rules to implement this section.

- **Sec. 5.** RCW 66.24.655 and 2013 c 237 s 1 are each amended to 14 read as follows:
 - (1) There is a theater license to sell spirits, beer, including strong beer, or wine, or all, at retail, for consumption on theater premises. A spirits, beer, and wine theater license may be issued only to theaters that have no more than one hundred twenty seats per screen and that are maintained in a substantial manner as a place for preparing, cooking, and serving complete meals and providing tabletop accommodations for in-theater dining. Requirements for complete meals are the same as those adopted by the board in rules pursuant to chapter 34.05 RCW for a spirits, beer, and wine restaurant license authorized by RCW 66.24.400. The annual fee for a spirits, beer, and wine theater license is ((two thousand dollars)) \$1,000.
 - (2) If the theater premises is to be frequented by minors, an alcohol control plan must be submitted to the board at the time of application. The alcohol control plan must be approved by the board and be prominently posted on the premises, prior to minors being allowed.
 - (3) For the purposes of this section:
 - (a) "Alcohol control plan" means a written, dated, and signed plan submitted to the board by an applicant or licensee for the entire theater premises, or rooms or areas therein, that shows where and when alcohol is permitted, where and when minors are permitted, and the control measures used to ensure that minors are not able to obtain alcohol or be exposed to environments where drinking alcohol predominates.

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(b) "Theater" means a place of business where motion pictures or other primarily nonparticipatory entertainment are shown.

- (4) The board must adopt rules regarding alcohol control plans and necessary control measures to ensure that minors are not able to obtain alcohol or be exposed to areas where drinking alcohol predominates. All alcohol control plans must include a requirement that any person involved in the serving of spirits, beer, and/or wine must have completed a mandatory alcohol server training program.
- (5)(a) A licensee that is an entity that is exempt from taxation under Title 26 U.S.C. Sec. 501(c)(3) of the federal internal revenue code of 1986, as amended as of January 1, 2013, may enter into arrangements with a spirits, beer, or wine manufacturer, importer, or distributor for brand advertising at the theater or promotion of events held at the theater. The financial arrangements providing for the brand advertising or promotion of events may not be used as an inducement to purchase the products of the manufacturer, importer, or distributor entering into the arrangement and such arrangements may not result in the exclusion of brands or products of other companies.
- (b) The arrangements allowed under this subsection (5) are an exception to arrangements prohibited under RCW 66.28.305. The board must monitor the impacts of these arrangements. The board may conduct audits of a licensee and the affiliated business to determine compliance with this subsection (5). Audits may include, but are not limited to: Product selection at the facility; purchase patterns of the licensee; contracts with the spirits, beer, or wine manufacturer, importer, or distributor; and the amount allocated or used for spirits, beer, or wine advertising by the licensee, affiliated business, manufacturer, importer, or distributor under the arrangements.
- 30 (6) The maximum penalties prescribed by the board in WAC 31 314-29-020 relating to fines and suspensions are double for violations involving minors or the failure to follow the alcohol control plan with respect to theaters licensed under this section.
- **Sec. 6.** RCW 66.24.690 and 2014 c 29 s 1 are each amended to read as follows:
 - (1) There shall be a caterer's license to sell spirits, beer, and wine, by the individual serving, at retail, for consumption on the premises at an event location that is either owned, leased, or operated either by the caterer or the sponsor of the event for which

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catering services are being provided. If the event is open to the public, it must be sponsored by a society or organization as defined in RCW 66.24.375. If attendance at the event is limited to members or invited guests of the sponsoring individual, society, or organization, the requirement that the sponsor must be a society or organization as defined in RCW 66.24.375 is waived. The licensee must serve food as required by rules of the board.

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- (2) The annual fee is two hundred dollars for the beer license, two hundred dollars for the wine license, or four hundred dollars for a combination beer and wine license. The annual fee for a combined beer, wine, and spirits license is ((one thousand dollars)) \$500.
- (3) The holder of this license shall notify the board or its designee of the date, time, place, and location of any catered event at which liquor will be served, sold, or consumed. The board shall create rules detailing notification requirements. Upon request, the licensee shall provide to the board all necessary or requested information concerning the individual, society, or organization that will be holding the catered function at which the caterer's liquor license will be utilized.
- 20 (4) The holder of this license may, under conditions established 21 by the board, store liquor on other premises operated by the licensee 22 so long as the other premises are owned or controlled by a leasehold 23 interest by that licensee.
- 24 (5) The holder of this license is prohibited from catering events 25 at locations that are already licensed to sell liquor under this 26 chapter.
- 27 (6) The holder of this license is responsible for all sales, 28 service, and consumption of alcohol at the location of the catered 29 event.
- 30 **Sec. 7.** RCW 66.24.140 and 2020 c 238 s 1 are each amended to 31 read as follows:
- 32 (1) There is a license to distillers, including blending, 33 rectifying, and bottling; fee ((two thousand dollars)) <u>\$1,000</u> per 34 annum, unless provided otherwise as follows:
- 35 (a) For distillers producing one hundred fifty thousand gallons 36 or less of spirits with at least half of the raw materials used in 37 the production grown in Washington, the license fee must be reduced 38 to one hundred dollars per annum;

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- (b) The board must license stills used and to be used solely and only by a commercial chemist for laboratory purposes, and not for the manufacture of liquor for sale, at a fee of twenty dollars per annum;
- (c) The board must license stills used and to be used solely and only for laboratory purposes in any school, college, or educational institution in the state, without fee; and
- (d) The board must license stills that have been duly licensed as fruit and/or wine distilleries by the federal government, used and to be used solely as fruit and/or wine distilleries in the production of fruit brandy and wine spirits, at a fee of two hundred dollars per annum.
 - (2) Any distillery licensed under this section may:

- (a) Sell, for off-premises consumption, spirits of the distillery's own production, spirits produced by another distillery or craft distillery licensed in this state, or vermouth or sparkling wine products produced by a licensee in this state. A distillery selling spirits or other alcohol authorized under this subsection must comply with the applicable laws and rules relating to retailers for those products;
- (b) Contract distilled spirits for, and sell contract distilled spirits to, holders of distillers' or manufacturers' licenses, including licenses issued under RCW 66.24.520, or for export; and
- (c) Serve samples of spirits for free or for a charge, and sell servings of spirits, vermouth, and sparkling wine to customers for on-premises consumption, at the premises of the distillery indoors, outdoors, or in any combination thereof, and at the distillery's offsite tasting rooms in accordance with this chapter, subject to the following conditions:
- (i) A distillery may provide to customers, for free or for a charge, for on-premises consumption, spirits samples that are one-half ounce or less per sample of spirits, and that may be adulterated with water, ice, other alcohol entitled to be served or sold on the licensed premises under this section, or nonalcoholic mixers;
- (ii) A distillery may sell, for on-premises consumption, servings of spirits of the distillery's own production or spirits produced by another distillery or craft distillery licensed in this state, which must be adulterated with water, ice, other alcohol entitled to be sold or served on the licensed premises, or nonalcoholic mixers if the revenue derived from the sale of spirits for on-premises consumption under this subsection (2)(c)(ii) does not comprise more

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than thirty percent of the overall gross revenue earned in the tasting room during the calendar year. Any distiller who sells adulterated products under this subsection, must file an annual report with the board that summarizes the distiller's revenue sources; and

- (iii) A distillery may sell, for on-premises consumption, servings of vermouth or sparkling wine products produced by a licensee in this state.
- (3) (a) If a distillery provides or sells spirits or other alcohol products authorized to be sold or provided to customers for onpremises or off-premises consumption that are produced by another distillery, craft distillery, or licensee in this state, then at any one time no more than twenty-five percent of the alcohol stock-keeping units offered or sold by the distillery at its distillery premises and at any off-site tasting rooms licensed under RCW 66.24.146 may be vermouth, sparkling wine, or spirits made by another distillery, craft distillery, or licensee in this state. If a distillery sells fewer than twenty alcohol stock-keeping units of products of its own production, it may sell up to five alcohol stock-keeping units of vermouth, sparkling wine, or spirits produced by another distillery, craft distillery, or licensee in this state.
- (b) A person is limited to receiving or purchasing, for onpremises consumption, no more than two ounces total of spirits that are unadulterated. Any additional spirits purchased for on-premises consumption must be adulterated as authorized in this section.
- (c)(i) No person under twenty-one years of age may be on the premises of a distillery tasting room, including an off-site tasting room licensed under RCW 66.24.146, unless they are accompanied by their parent or legal guardian.
- (ii) Every distillery tasting room, including the off-site tasting rooms licensed under RCW 66.24.146, where alcohol is sampled, sold, or served, must include a designated area where persons under twenty-one years of age are allowed to enter. Such location may be in a separate room or a designated area within the tasting room separated from the remainder of the tasting room space as authorized by the board.
- (iii) Except for (c)(iv) of this subsection, or an event where a private party has secured a private banquet permit, no person under twenty-one years of age may be on the distillery premises, or the off-site tasting rooms licensed under RCW 66.24.146, past 9:00 p.m.

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(iv) Notwithstanding the limitations of (c)(iii) of this subsection, persons under twenty-one years of age who are children of owners, operators, or managers of a distillery or an off-site tasting room licensed under RCW 66.24.146, may be in any area of a distillery, tasting room, or an off-site tasting room licensed under RCW 66.24.146, provided they must be under the direct supervision of their parent or legal guardian while on the premises.

- 8 (d) Any person serving or selling spirits or other alcohol 9 authorized to be served or sold by a distillery must obtain a class 10 12 alcohol server permit.
 - (e) A distillery may sell nonalcoholic products at retail.
- **Sec. 8.** RCW 66.24.146 and 2020 c 238 s 3 are each amended to 13 read as follows:
 - (1) There is a tasting room license available to distillery and craft distillery licensees. A tasting room license authorizes the operation of an off-site tasting room, in addition to a tasting room attached to the distillery's or craft distillery's production facility, at which the licensee may sample, serve, and sell spirits and alcohol products authorized to be sampled, served, and sold under RCW 66.24.140 and 66.24.145, for on-premises and off-premises consumption, subject to the same limitations as provided in RCW 66.24.140 and 66.24.145.
 - (2) A distillery or craft distillery licensed production facility is eligible for no more than two off-site tasting room licenses located in this state, which may be indoors, or outdoors or a combination thereof, and which shall be administratively tied to a licensed production facility. A separate license is required for the operation of each off-site tasting room. The fee for each off-site tasting room license is ((two thousand dollars)) \$1,000 per annum. No additional license is required for a distillery or craft distillery to sample, serve, and sell spirits and alcohol to customers in a tasting room on the distillery or craft distillery premises as authorized under this section, RCW 66.24.1472, 66.24.140, 66.24.145, 66.28.040, 66.24.630, and 66.28.310. Off-site tasting rooms may have a section identified and segregated as federally bonded spaces for the storage of bulk or packaged spirits. Product of the licensee's production may be bottled or packaged in the space.

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- NEW SECTION. Sec. 9. Sections 2 through 8 of this act expire 2 December 31, 2022.
- NEW SECTION. Sec. 10. This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect May 1, 2021.

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