
Public Safety Committee

SSB 5132

Brief Description: Expanding the powers of liquor enforcement officers.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Law & Justice (originally sponsored by Senators Rivers, Conway, Keiser and Chase; by request of Liquor and Cannabis Board).

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- States that the enforcement authority of the Liquor and Cannabis Board (LCB) includes the authority to enforce any penal law related to the manufacture, importation, transportation, distribution, or sale of marijuana, tobacco, or vapor products.
- Authorizes the LCB to enforce penal and traffic laws related to impaired driving of patrons in and around locations licensed by the LCB.

Hearing Date: 3/13/17

Staff: Omeara Harrington (786-7136).

Background:

The Washington State Liquor and Cannabis Board (LCB) administers and enforces alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana laws.

The LCB's Licensing and Regulation Division issues liquor licenses and permits for retail businesses, such as grocery stores, bars, and restaurants, as well as non-retail businesses like breweries and distributors. It additionally issues special occasion licenses and event permits. The LCB also issues marijuana, tobacco, and vapor products licenses.

The Enforcement and Education Division of the LCB is responsible for enforcing state liquor, marijuana, and tobacco laws and regulations. The LCB's enforcement operations include premises visits, compliance checks, undercover operations, and complaint investigations. In

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addition, the Enforcement and Education Division provides education to liquor, marijuana, and tobacco-licensed businesses, as well as to communities and law enforcement agencies.

The LCB and its liquor enforcement officers have the authority to enforce the penal laws relating to the manufacture, importation, transportation, possession, distribution and sale of liquor, as well as various penal provisions related to tobacco distribution and sale. Liquor enforcement officers may serve and execute all warrants and process of law issued by the courts and make arrests in enforcing the provisions related to liquor and tobacco. The LCB is also granted enforcement authority in the Uniform Controlled Substance Act and in the statutes regulating the sale of vapor products.

The LCB is a limited authority Washington law enforcement agency, and its enforcement officers are limited authority Washington law enforcement officers. A limited authority agency is one that has, as one of its functions (as opposed to its primary function), the apprehension or detection of persons committing infractions or violating the traffic or criminal laws related to limited subject areas. A limited authority Washington peace officer is any full-time, fully compensated officer of a limited authority Washington law enforcement agency empowered by that agency to detect or apprehend violators of the laws in some or all of the limited subject areas for which that agency is responsible.

Summary of Bill:

In addition to its existing powers, the LCB and its liquor enforcement officers have the power to enforce state penal laws relating to the manufacture, importation, transportation, possession, distribution, and sale of marijuana, tobacco, and vapor products. The LCB officers may serve and execute all warrants and process of law issued by the courts in enforcing these state penal provisions.

The LCB and its liquor enforcement officers may also enforce any penal or traffic law related to the impaired driving of patrons in and around locations licensed by the LCB.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on March 9, 2017.

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