

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5771

As of February 28, 2003

Title: An act relating to regulation of the sale of beer containing more than five and seven-tenths percent of alcohol by weight.

Brief Description: Creating a restricted beer retailer's license and defining mid-strength beer.

Sponsors: Senators Shin, Hewitt, Keiser, Franklin, Kastama, Honeyford, Prentice and Mulliken.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Commerce & Trade: 2/21/03.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE & TRADE

Staff: Elizabeth Mitchell (786-7430)

Background: Liquor Control Board rules allow for the creation of "alcohol impact areas," which are defined as areas within local jurisdictions adversely affected by chronic public inebriation or illegal activity associated with alcohol sales. Local jurisdictions must pass an ordinance establishing an alcohol impact area, and must make reasonable efforts to implement voluntary agreements to promote business practices that reduce chronic public inebriation and promote public welfare within the area. If these qualifications are met, local jurisdictions may apply to the board to officially recognize the alcohol impact area, and to place restrictions on the sale of alcohol within those areas.

In all areas of the state, the board can issue restricted grocery and specialty shop licenses if it finds that the sale of fortified wine (wine above 14 percent alcohol by volume) is against the public interest. The restricted license allows the licensee to sell only beer and table wine.

Summary of Substitute Bill: Before a government subdivision creates an alcohol impact area by ordinance, it must petition the board to issue a restricted grocery store or specialty shop license.

Under a restricted grocery store or specialty shop license, licensees may only sell: 1) table wine, and 2) specific beer that is not of a certain brand restricted in a board approved alcohol impact area as of January 1, 2003.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The original bill was not considered.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

