
Commerce & Labor Committee

SB 5902

Brief Description: Requiring additional state liquor stores to engage in Sunday sales.

Sponsors: Senators Prentice, Kohl-Welles, Delvin and Kline.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Directs the Liquor Control Board to expand Sunday sales in at least 29 additional state liquor stores.
- Requires a report on the increased Sunday sales to the Legislature by January 31, 2009.
- Provides for the annual deduction of \$1,950,000 from liquor revolving fund amounts otherwise going to the General Fund to be distributed to the: (1) Municipal Research Council to assist with research and services for ports and special purpose districts; and (2) Administrative Office of the Courts to assist superior courts with language interpreter services.

Hearing Date: 3/16/07

Staff: Joan Elgee (786-7106).

Background:

In 2005, the Legislature directed the Liquor Control Board (Board) to expand operations by including Sunday sales in at least 20 state liquor stores. The stores were to be selected from those expected to gross the most revenues on Sunday by considering factors including population density, proximity to shopping centers, and proximity to other businesses open on Sunday. The Board was required to report the results of the Sunday sales to the Legislature by January 31, 2007.

In selecting stores to be open on Sundays, the Legislature also directed the Board to give due consideration to: (1) the location of the store with respect to the proximity of places of worship, schools, and public institutions; and (2) motor vehicle accident data in the proximity of the store.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

The Board also was required to give notice to places of worship, schools, and public institutions within 500 feet.

According to the Board's report, Sunday sales experienced a steady growth since the project began in September 2005. The original biennial estimate for gross Sunday sales was \$9.55 million. In the January report, the Board revised the estimate to \$15.1 million for the biennium.

Excess funds in the liquor revolving fund remaining after certain distributions are distributed as follows: three-tenths of one percent to border areas; and from the remaining amount, 50 percent to the state General Fund, 10 percent to counties, and 40 percent to incorporated cities and towns.

The Municipal Research Council (Council) is a state agency that contracts for the provision of municipal research and services to cities, towns, and counties. The Council is funded through a portion of the liquor revolving fund monies that go to cities and towns and a portion of the liquor excise tax that goes to counties. The Council has authority to provide services for special purpose districts but has not been funded to do so.

When a non-English-speaking person is involved in a legal proceeding, the court must appoint a qualified interpreter. If the person is compelled to appear or is indigent, the cost is borne by the governmental body in which the proceedings are conducted.

Summary of Bill:

By September 1, 2007, the Board must expand its Sunday sales operations in at least 29 additional state stores. The criteria for selecting stores and the notice requirements are the same as for the initial 20 stores. The Board must report to the Legislature on the increased Sunday operations by January 31, 2009.

At the start of each fiscal year and prior to distributing excess funds in the liquor revolving fund to the General Fund, the treasurer must deduct \$1,950,000 and deposit this amount in the Public Benefit and Research Services Account. The account is created in the State Treasury. Moneys may be spent only after appropriation and may be used only for the Administrative Office of the Courts to assist the superior courts with language interpreter services and to assist the municipal council with research and services for ports and special purpose districts.

Rules Authority: The bill does not address the rule-making powers of an agency.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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