3

4 5

9

10 11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

SENATE BILL 6034

State of Washington 68th Legislature 2024 Regular Session

By Senators Schoesler and Dozier

Prefiled 01/05/24. Read first time 01/08/24. Referred to Committee on Business, Financial Services, Gaming & Trade.

- AN ACT Relating to clarifying the excise tax treatment of document recording and filing fees received by title and escrow businesses from clients for remittance to county recording and filing offices; reenacting and amending RCW 82.04.050; adding a new section to chapter 82.04 RCW; and creating new sections.
- 6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:
- 7 **Sec. 1.** RCW 82.04.050 and 2021 c 296 s 8 and 2021 c 143 s 2 are 8 each reenacted and amended to read as follows:
 - (1) (a) "Sale at retail" or "retail sale" means every sale of tangible personal property (including articles produced, fabricated, or imprinted) to all persons irrespective of the nature of their business and including, among others, without limiting the scope hereof, persons who install, repair, clean, alter, improve, construct, or decorate real or personal property of or for consumers other than a sale to a person who:
 - (i) Purchases for the purpose of resale as tangible personal property in the regular course of business without intervening use by such person, but a purchase for the purpose of resale by a regional transit authority under RCW 81.112.300 is not a sale for resale; or
- 20 (ii) Installs, repairs, cleans, alters, imprints, improves, 21 constructs, or decorates real or personal property of or for

p. 1 SB 6034

consumers, if such tangible personal property becomes an ingredient or component of such real or personal property without intervening use by such person; or

- (iii) Purchases for the purpose of consuming the property purchased in producing for sale as a new article of tangible personal property or substance, of which such property becomes an ingredient or component or is a chemical used in processing, when the primary purpose of such chemical is to create a chemical reaction directly through contact with an ingredient of a new article being produced for sale; or
- (iv) Purchases for the purpose of consuming the property purchased in producing ferrosilicon which is subsequently used in producing magnesium for sale, if the primary purpose of such property is to create a chemical reaction directly through contact with an ingredient of ferrosilicon; or
- 16 (v) Purchases for the purpose of providing the property to 17 consumers as part of competitive telephone service, as defined in RCW 18 82.04.065; or
- (vi) Purchases for the purpose of satisfying the person's obligations under an extended warranty as defined in subsection (7) of this section, if such tangible personal property replaces or becomes an ingredient or component of property covered by the extended warranty without intervening use by such person.
 - (b) The term includes every sale of tangible personal property that is used or consumed or to be used or consumed in the performance of any activity defined as a "sale at retail" or "retail sale" even though such property is resold or used as provided in (a)(i) through (vi) of this subsection following such use.
 - (c) The term also means every sale of tangible personal property to persons engaged in any business that is taxable under RCW 82.04.280(1) (a), (b), and (g), 82.04.290, and 82.04.2908.
 - (2) The term "sale at retail" or "retail sale" includes the sale of or charge made for tangible personal property consumed and/or for labor and services rendered in respect to the following:
 - (a) The installing, repairing, cleaning, altering, imprinting, or improving of tangible personal property of or for consumers, including charges made for the mere use of facilities in respect thereto, but excluding charges made for the use of self-service laundry facilities, and also excluding sales of laundry service to

p. 2 SB 6034

nonprofit health care facilities, and excluding services rendered in respect to live animals, birds and insects;

- (b) The constructing, repairing, decorating, or improving of new or existing buildings or other structures under, upon, or above real property of or for consumers, including the installing or attaching of any article of tangible personal property therein or thereto, whether or not such personal property becomes a part of the realty by virtue of installation, and also includes the sale of services or charges made for the clearing of land and the moving of earth excepting the mere leveling of land used in commercial farming or agriculture;
- (c) The constructing, repairing, or improving of any structure upon, above, or under any real property owned by an owner who conveys the property by title, possession, or any other means to the person performing such construction, repair, or improvement for the purpose of performing such construction, repair, or improvement and the property is then reconveyed by title, possession, or any other means to the original owner;
- (d) The cleaning, fumigating, razing, or moving of existing buildings or structures, but does not include the charge made for janitorial services; and for purposes of this section the term "janitorial services" means those cleaning and caretaking services ordinarily performed by commercial janitor service businesses including, but not limited to, wall and window washing, floor cleaning and waxing, and the cleaning in place of rugs, drapes and upholstery. The term "janitorial services" does not include painting, papering, repairing, furnace or septic tank cleaning, snow removal or sandblasting;
- (e) Automobile towing and similar automotive transportation services, but not in respect to those required to report and pay taxes under chapter 82.16 RCW;
- (f) The furnishing of lodging and all other services by a hotel, rooming house, tourist court, motel, trailer camp, and the granting of any similar license to use real property, as distinguished from the renting or leasing of real property, and it is presumed that the occupancy of real property for a continuous period of one month or more constitutes a rental or lease of real property and not a mere license to use or enjoy the same. For the purposes of this subsection, it is presumed that the sale of and charge made for the furnishing of lodging for a continuous period of one month or more to

p. 3 SB 6034

- a person is a rental or lease of real property and not a mere license to enjoy the same. For the purposes of this section, it is presumed that the sale of and charge made for the furnishing of lodging offered regularly for public occupancy for periods of less than a month constitutes a license to use or enjoy the property subject to sales and use tax and not a rental or lease of property;
- (g) The installing, repairing, altering, or improving of digital goods for consumers;
- (h) Persons taxable under (a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), and (g) of this subsection when such sales or charges are for property, labor and services which are used or consumed in whole or in part by such persons in the performance of any activity defined as a "sale at retail" or "retail sale" even though such property, labor and services may be resold after such use or consumption. Nothing contained in this subsection may be construed to modify subsection (1) of this section may be construed in subsection (1) of this section may be construed to modify this subsection.
- (3) The term "sale at retail" or "retail sale" includes the sale of or charge made for personal, business, or professional services including amounts designated as interest, rents, fees, admission, and other service emoluments however designated, received by persons engaging in the following business activities:
- (a) Abstract, title insurance, and escrow services. "Abstract, title insurance, and escrow services" do not include amounts received by a person for remittance to a county filing office as either a document filing or recording fee, or both, if separately identified on the invoice;
 - (b) Credit bureau services;

- (c) Automobile parking and storage garage services;
- (d) Landscape maintenance and horticultural services but excluding (i) horticultural services provided to farmers and (ii) pruning, trimming, repairing, removing, and clearing of trees and brush near electric transmission or distribution lines or equipment, if performed by or at the direction of an electric utility;
- 35 (e) Service charges associated with tickets to professional 36 sporting events;
- 37 (f) The following personal services: Tanning salon services, 38 tattoo parlor services, steam bath services, turkish bath services, 39 escort services, and dating services; and

p. 4 SB 6034

(g) (i) Operating an athletic or fitness facility, including all charges for the use of such a facility or for any associated services and amenities, except as provided in (g) (ii) of this subsection.

- (ii) Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in (g)(i) of this subsection (3), the term "sale at retail" and "retail sale" under this subsection does not include:
- (A) Separately stated charges for the use of an athletic or fitness facility where such use is primarily for a purpose other than engaging in or receiving instruction in a physical fitness activity;
- (B) Separately stated charges for the use of a discrete portion of an athletic or fitness facility, other than a pool, where such discrete portion of the facility does not by itself meet the definition of "athletic or fitness facility" in this subsection;
- (C) Separately stated charges for services, such as advertising, massage, nutritional consulting, and body composition testing, that do not require the customer to engage in physical fitness activities to receive the service. The exclusion in this subsection (3)(g)(ii)(C) does not apply to personal training services and instruction in a physical fitness activity;
- (D) Separately stated charges for physical therapy provided by a physical therapist, as those terms are defined in RCW 18.74.010, or occupational therapy provided by an occupational therapy practitioner, as those terms are defined in RCW 18.59.020, when performed pursuant to a referral from an authorized health care practitioner or in consultation with an authorized health care practitioner. For the purposes of this subsection (3)(g)(ii)(D), an authorized health care practitioner means a health care practitioner licensed under chapter 18.83, 18.25, 18.36A, 18.57, 18.71, or 18.71A RCW, or, until July 1, 2022, chapter 18.57A RCW;
- (E) Rent or association fees charged by a landlord or residential association to a tenant or residential owner with access to an athletic or fitness facility maintained by the landlord or residential association, unless the rent or fee varies depending on whether the tenant or owner has access to the facility;
- (F) Services provided in the regular course of employment by an employee with access to an athletic or fitness facility maintained by the employer for use without charge by its employees or their family members;
- (G) The provision of access to an athletic or fitness facility by an educational institution to its students and staff. However,

p. 5 SB 6034

charges made by an educational institution to its alumni or other members of the public for the use of any of the educational institution's athletic or fitness facilities are a retail sale under this subsection (3)(g). For purposes of this subsection (3)(g)(ii)(G), "educational institution" has the same meaning as in RCW 82.04.170;

- (H) Yoga, chi gong, or martial arts classes, training, or events held at a community center, park, school gymnasium, college or university, hospital or other medical facility, private residence, or any other facility that is not operated within and as part of an athletic or fitness facility.
- (iii) Nothing in (g)(ii) of this subsection (3) may be construed to affect the taxation of sales made by the operator of an athletic or fitness facility, where such sales are defined as a retail sale under any provision of this section other than this subsection (3).
- 16 (iv) For the purposes of this subsection (3)(g), the following 17 definitions apply:
 - (A) "Athletic or fitness facility" means an indoor or outdoor facility or portion of a facility that is primarily used for: Exercise classes; strength and conditioning programs; personal training services; tennis, racquetball, handball, squash, or pickleball; or other activities requiring the use of exercise or strength training equipment, such as treadmills, elliptical machines, stair climbers, stationary cycles, rowing machines, pilates equipment, balls, climbing ropes, jump ropes, and weightlifting equipment.
 - (B) "Martial arts" means any of the various systems of training for physical combat or self-defense. "Martial arts" includes, but is not limited to, karate, kung fu, tae kwon do, Krav Maga, boxing, kickboxing, jujitsu, shootfighting, wrestling, aikido, judo, hapkido, Kendo, tai chi, and mixed martial arts.
 - (C) "Physical fitness activities" means activities that involve physical exertion for the purpose of improving or maintaining the general fitness, strength, flexibility, conditioning, or health of the participant. "Physical fitness activities" includes participating in yoga, chi gong, or martial arts.
- 37 (4)(a) The term also includes the renting or leasing of tangible 38 personal property to consumers.

p. 6 SB 6034

- (b) The term does not include the renting or leasing of tangible personal property where the lease or rental is for the purpose of sublease or subrent.
- (5) The term also includes the providing of "competitive telephone service," "telecommunications service," or "ancillary services," as those terms are defined in RCW 82.04.065, to consumers.
- (6) (a) The term also includes the sale of prewritten computer software to a consumer, regardless of the method of delivery to the end user. For purposes of (a) and (b) of this subsection, the sale of prewritten computer software includes the sale of or charge made for a key or an enabling or activation code, where the key or code is required to activate prewritten computer software and put the software into use. There is no separate sale of the key or code from the prewritten computer software, regardless of how the sale may be characterized by the vendor or by the purchaser.
- 16 (b) The term "retail sale" does not include the sale of or charge 17 made for:
 - (i) Custom software; or

- (ii) The customization of prewritten computer software.
- (c)(i) The term also includes the charge made to consumers for the right to access and use prewritten computer software, where possession of the software is maintained by the seller or a third party, regardless of whether the charge for the service is on a per use, per user, per license, subscription, or some other basis.
- (ii) (A) The service described in (c)(i) of this subsection (6) includes the right to access and use prewritten computer software to perform data processing.
- (B) For purposes of this subsection (6)(c)(ii), "data processing" means the systematic performance of operations on data to extract the required information in an appropriate form or to convert the data to usable information. Data processing includes check processing, image processing, form processing, survey processing, payroll processing, claim processing, and similar activities.
- (7) The term also includes the sale of or charge made for an extended warranty to a consumer. For purposes of this subsection, "extended warranty" means an agreement for a specified duration to perform the replacement or repair of tangible personal property at no additional charge or a reduced charge for tangible personal property, labor, or both, or to provide indemnification for the replacement or repair of tangible personal property, based on the occurrence of

p. 7 SB 6034

- specified events. The term "extended warranty" does not include an agreement, otherwise meeting the definition of extended warranty in this subsection, if no separate charge is made for the agreement and the value of the agreement is included in the sales price of the tangible personal property covered by the agreement. For purposes of this subsection, "sales price" has the same meaning as in RCW 82.08.010.
- 8 (8)(a) The term also includes the following sales to consumers of digital goods, digital codes, and digital automated services:

- (i) Sales in which the seller has granted the purchaser the right of permanent use;
- (ii) Sales in which the seller has granted the purchaser a right of use that is less than permanent;
- (iii) Sales in which the purchaser is not obligated to make continued payment as a condition of the sale; and
- 16 (iv) Sales in which the purchaser is obligated to make continued 17 payment as a condition of the sale.
 - (b) A retail sale of digital goods, digital codes, or digital automated services under this subsection (8) includes any services provided by the seller exclusively in connection with the digital goods, digital codes, or digital automated services, whether or not a separate charge is made for such services.
 - (c) For purposes of this subsection, "permanent" means perpetual or for an indefinite or unspecified length of time. A right of permanent use is presumed to have been granted unless the agreement between the seller and the purchaser specifies or the circumstances surrounding the transaction suggest or indicate that the right to use terminates on the occurrence of a condition subsequent.
 - (9) The term also includes the charge made for providing tangible personal property along with an operator for a fixed or indeterminate period of time. A consideration of this is that the operator is necessary for the tangible personal property to perform as designed. For the purpose of this subsection (9), an operator must do more than maintain, inspect, or set up the tangible personal property.
 - (10) The term does not include the sale of or charge made for labor and services rendered in respect to the building, repairing, or improving of any street, place, road, highway, easement, right-of-way, mass public transportation terminal or parking facility, bridge, tunnel, or trestle which is owned by a municipal corporation or political subdivision of the state or by the United States and which

p. 8 SB 6034

is used or to be used primarily for foot or vehicular traffic including mass transportation vehicles of any kind.

1

2

4

5

7

8

9

10 11

12

1314

15

1617

18

19

2021

2223

2425

26

27

2829

30

3132

33

34

3536

37

3839

- (11) The term also does not include sales of chemical sprays or washes to persons for the purpose of postharvest treatment of fruit for the prevention of scald, fungus, mold, or decay, nor does it include sales of feed, seed, seedlings, fertilizer, agents for enhanced pollination including insects such as bees, and spray materials to: (a) Persons who participate in the federal conservation reserve program, the environmental quality incentives program, the wetlands reserve program, and the wildlife habitat incentives program, or their successors administered by the United States department of agriculture; (b) farmers for the purpose of producing for sale any agricultural product; (c) farmers for the purpose of providing bee pollination services; and (d) farmers acting under cooperative habitat development or access contracts with organization exempt from federal income tax under 26 U.S.C. Sec. 501(c)(3) of the federal internal revenue code or the Washington state department of fish and wildlife to produce or improve wildlife habitat on land that the farmer owns or leases.
- (12) The term does not include the sale of or charge made for labor and services rendered in respect to the constructing, repairing, decorating, or improving of new or existing buildings or other structures under, upon, or above real property of or for the United States, any instrumentality thereof, or a county or city housing authority created pursuant to chapter 35.82 RCW, including the installing, or attaching of any article of tangible personal property therein or thereto, whether or not such personal property becomes a part of the realty by virtue of installation. Nor does the term include the sale of services or charges made for the clearing of land and the moving of earth of or for the United States, any instrumentality thereof, or a county or city housing authority. Nor does the term include the sale of services or charges made for cleaning up for the United States, or its instrumentalities, radioactive waste and other by-products of weapons production and nuclear research and development.
- (13) The term does not include the sale of or charge made for labor, services, or tangible personal property pursuant to agreements providing maintenance services for bus, rail, or rail fixed guideway equipment when a regional transit authority is the recipient of the

p. 9 SB 6034

labor, services, or tangible personal property, and a transit agency, as defined in RCW 81.104.015, performs the labor or services.

- (14) The term does not include the sale for resale of any service described in this section if the sale would otherwise constitute a "sale at retail" and "retail sale" under this section.
- (15)(a) The term "sale at retail" or "retail sale" includes amounts charged, however labeled, to consumers to engage in any of the activities listed in this subsection (15)(a), including the furnishing of any associated equipment or, except as otherwise provided in this subsection, providing instruction in such activities, where such charges are not otherwise defined as a "sale at retail" or "retail sale" in this section:
- (i) (A) Golf, including any variant in which either golf balls or golf clubs are used, such as miniature golf, hitting golf balls at a driving range, and golf simulators, and including fees charged by a golf course to a player for using his or her own cart. However, charges for golf instruction are not a retail sale, provided that if the instruction involves the use of a golfing facility that would otherwise require the payment of a fee, such as green fees or driving range fees, such fees, including the applicable retail sales tax, must be separately identified and charged by the golfing facility operator to the instructor or the person receiving the instruction.
- (B) Notwithstanding (a) (i) (A) of this subsection (15) and except as otherwise provided in this subsection (15) (a) (i) (B), the term "sale at retail" or "retail sale" does not include amounts charged to participate in, or conduct, a golf tournament or other competitive event. However, amounts paid by event participants to the golf facility operator are retail sales under this subsection (15) (a) (i). Likewise, amounts paid by the event organizer to the golf facility are retail sales under this subsection (15) (a) (i), if such amounts vary based on the number of event participants;
- (ii) Ballooning, hang gliding, indoor or outdoor sky diving, paragliding, parasailing, and similar activities;
- 34 (iii) Air hockey, billiards, pool, foosball, darts, shuffleboard,
 35 ping pong, and similar games;
 - (iv) Access to amusement park, theme park, and water park facilities, including but not limited to charges for admission and locker or cabana rentals. Discrete charges for rides or other attractions or entertainment that are in addition to the charge for admission are not a retail sale under this subsection (15)(a)(iv).

p. 10 SB 6034

- For the purposes of this subsection, an amusement park or theme park is a location that provides permanently affixed amusement rides, games, and other entertainment, but does not include parks or zoos for which the primary purpose is the exhibition of wildlife, or fairs, carnivals, and festivals as defined in (b)(i) of this subsection;
 - (v) Batting cage activities;

- (vi) Bowling, but not including competitive events, except that amounts paid by the event participants to the bowling alley operator are retail sales under this subsection (15)(a)(vi). Likewise, amounts paid by the event organizer to the operator of the bowling alley are retail sales under this subsection (15)(a)(vi), if such amounts vary based on the number of event participants;
- 14 (vii) Climbing on artificial climbing structures, whether indoors 15 or outdoors;
 - (viii) Day trips for sightseeing purposes;
- 17 (ix) Bungee jumping, zip lining, and riding inside a ball, 18 whether inflatable or otherwise;
 - (x) Horseback riding offered to the public, where the seller furnishes the horse to the buyer and providing instruction is not the primary focus of the activity, including guided rides, but not including therapeutic horseback riding provided by an instructor certified by a nonprofit organization that offers national or international certification for therapeutic riding instructors;
 - (xi) Fishing, including providing access to private fishing areas and charter or guided fishing, except that fishing contests and license fees imposed by a government entity are not a retail sale under this subsection;
 - (xii) Guided hunting and hunting at game farms and shooting preserves, except that hunting contests and license fees imposed by a government entity are not a retail sale under this subsection;
 - (xiii) Swimming, but only in respect to (A) recreational or fitness swimming that is open to the public, such as open swim, lap swimming, and special events like kids night out and pool parties during open swim time, and (B) pool parties for private events, such as birthdays, family gatherings, and employee outings. Fees for swimming lessons, to participate in swim meets and other competitions, or to join a swim team, club, or aquatic facility are not retail sales under this subsection (15) (a) (xiii);

p. 11 SB 6034

(xiv) Go-karting, bumper cars, and other motorized activities where the seller provides the vehicle and the premises where the buyer will operate the vehicle;

(xv) Indoor or outdoor playground activities, such as inflatable bounce structures and other inflatables; mazes; trampolines; slides; ball pits; games of tag, including laser tag and soft-dart tag; and human gyroscope rides, regardless of whether such activities occur at the seller's place of business, but not including playground activities provided for children by a licensed child day care center or licensed family day care provider as those terms are defined in RCW 43.216.010;

(xvi) Shooting sports and activities, such as target shooting, skeet, trap, sporting clays, "5" stand, and archery, but only in respect to discrete charges to members of the public to engage in these activities, but not including fees to enter a competitive event, instruction that is entirely or predominately classroom based, or to join or renew a membership at a club, range, or other facility;

(xvii) Paintball and airsoft activities;

(xviii) Skating, including ice skating, roller skating, and inline skating, but only in respect to discrete charges to members of the public to engage in skating activities, but not including skating lessons, competitive events, team activities, or fees to join or renew a membership at a skating facility, club, or other organization;

(xix) Nonmotorized snow sports and activities, such as downhill and cross-country skiing, snowboarding, ski jumping, sledding, snow tubing, snowshoeing, and similar snow sports and activities, whether engaged in outdoors or in an indoor facility with or without snow, but only in respect to discrete charges to the public for the use of land or facilities to engage in nonmotorized snow sports and activities, such as fees, however labeled, for the use of ski lifts and tows and daily or season passes for access to trails or other areas where nonmotorized snow sports and activities are conducted. However, fees for the following are not retail sales under this subsection (15)(a)(xix): (A) Instructional lessons; (B) permits issued by a governmental entity to park a vehicle on or access public lands; and (C) permits or leases granted by an owner of private timberland for recreational access to areas used primarily for growing and harvesting timber; and

p. 12 SB 6034

(xx) Scuba diving; snorkeling; river rafting; surfing; kiteboarding; flyboarding; water slides; inflatables, such as water pillows, water trampolines, and water rollers; and similar water sports and activities.

- (b) Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in this subsection (15), the term "sale at retail" or "retail sale" does not include charges:
- (i) Made for admission to, and rides or attractions at, fairs, carnivals, and festivals. For the purposes of this subsection, fairs, carnivals, and festivals are events that do not exceed 21 days and a majority of the amusement rides, if any, are not affixed to real property;
- (ii) Made by an educational institution to its students and staff for activities defined as retail sales by (a)(i) through (xx) of this subsection. However, charges made by an educational institution to its alumni or other members of the general public for these activities are a retail sale under this subsection (15). For purposes of this subsection (15)(b)(ii), "educational institution" has the same meaning as in RCW 82.04.170;
- (iii) Made by a vocational school for commercial diver training that is licensed by the workforce training and education coordinating board under chapter 28C.10 RCW; or
 - (iv) Made for day camps offered by a nonprofit organization or state or local governmental entity that provide youth not older than age 18, or that are focused on providing individuals with disabilities or mental illness, the opportunity to participate in a variety of supervised activities.
 - (16) (a) The term "sale at retail" or "retail sale" includes the purchase or acquisition of tangible personal property and specified services by a person who receives either a qualifying grant exempt from tax under RCW 82.04.767 or 82.16.320 or a grant deductible under RCW 82.04.4339, except for transactions excluded from the definition of "sale at retail" or "retail sale" by any other provision of this section. Nothing in this subsection (16) may be construed to limit the application of any other provision of this section to purchases by a recipient of either a qualifying grant exempt from tax under RCW 82.04.767 or a grant deductible under RCW 82.04.4339, or by any other person.
- 39 (b) For purposes of this subsection (16), "specified services" 40 means:

p. 13 SB 6034

- (i) The constructing, repairing, decorating, or improving of new or existing buildings or other structures under, upon, or above real property, including the installing or attaching of any article of tangible personal property therein or thereto, whether or not such personal property becomes a part of the realty by virtue of installation;
- 7 (ii) The clearing of land or the moving of earth, whether or not 8 associated with activities described in (b)(i) of this subsection 9 (16);
- 10 (iii) The razing or moving of existing buildings or structures; 11 and
- 12 (iv) Landscape maintenance and horticultural services.
- NEW SECTION. Sec. 2. A new section is added to chapter 82.04 RCW to read as follows:
- This chapter does not apply to amounts received for remittance to a county filing office as either a document filing or recording fee, or both. A person is eligible for the exemption under this section only if the person is primarily engaged in abstract, title insurance, or escrow services and the amounts are separately identified on the invoice.
- NEW SECTION. Sec. 3. RCW 82.32.805 and 82.32.808 do not apply to this act.
- NEW SECTION. Sec. 4. This act applies prospectively as well as retroactively to disputed assessments pending before the department of revenue, board of tax appeals, or any court of law.

--- END ---

p. 14 SB 6034