
OLR Bill Analysis

sHB 6854

AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER PROTECTION'S RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING ALCOHOLIC LIQUOR REGULATION.

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SUMMARY

This bill makes various unrelated changes to the Liquor Control Act. It also makes various other minor, technical, and conforming changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2025, unless otherwise stated.

§§ 1-8, 10-12 & 14 — DAILY IN-STATE TRANSPORTER'S PERMIT

Establishes a daily in-state transporter's permit that allows the permittee to sell and serve alcoholic liquor on certain boats and livery services (e.g., limousines); allows a daily permittee to convert to an annual permit

The bill establishes a daily in-state transporter's permit as an alternative to the annual permit. Like the annual permit, the daily permittee may commercially transport alcoholic liquor as well as sell and serve alcoholic liquor (e.g., beer, wine, and spirits) on certain boats and livery services (e.g., limousines).

The bill allows the daily permittee to, with Department of Consumer Protection (DCP) approval, sell and serve alcoholic liquor for consumption on boats hired to transport passengers and motor vehicles in livery services. One permit covers all boats and vehicles under common control, direction, management, or ownership.

When applying for DCP approval, on a form and in a manner the commissioner sets, the owner must specifically identify each boat and vehicle where alcohol sales or consumption will be available. The permit fee is \$150 for each boat or vehicle to be used during the calendar year as requested on the application. Under the bill, the commissioner may issue up to eight permits to any backer in a calendar year.

At any point in the year, the permittee may apply to DCP, as the commissioner requires, to convert to an annual permit. The annual permit's effective date is the date of the first daily permit issuance that calendar year. The annual fee is \$1,250 for the first boat or vehicle and another \$200 for each additional boat or vehicle, but the applicant can subtract any fees already paid that calendar year, except there is no rebate for fees exceeding this amount.

The bill also makes various minor, technical, and conforming changes.

§ 8 — GROCERY STORE BEER PERMIT

Updates the qualifications for a grocery store beer permit to specify that (1) the store must derive more than 50% of its retail sales from groceries and (2) stores that primarily sell one particular food item do not qualify for the permit

The bill updates the qualifications for a grocery store beer permit to specify that the store must derive more than 50% of its retail sales from groceries, rather than just be primarily engaged in retail sale of groceries. As under existing law, a grocery store is not required to sell any particular type of grocery item.

The bill also specifies that stores that primarily engage in the retail sale of one particular food item or items (e.g., bakery products) do not qualify for a permit. It also provides additional examples of different foods that are considered groceries (e.g., dairy products, eggs, and fruit).

The bill also makes minor and technical changes.

§§ 9, 16 & 17 — QUALIFIED MANAGED RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITIES

Allows a qualified managed residential community to hold a restaurant caterer permit to allow the community to serve alcohol at the daily scheduled meal on the community's premises as well as for on-site functions, occasions, or events

The bill allows a qualified managed residential community to hold a restaurant caterer permit to allow the community to serve alcohol at the daily scheduled meals on the community's premises.

Under the bill, a qualified managed residential community is generally a facility consisting of private residential units that provide a managed group living environment that includes housing and services for individuals primarily age 55 and older. It also (1) has an adequate, suitable, and sanitary kitchen, dining room, and facilities to provide hot meals in compliance with the local department of health's regulations; (2) complies with all other local health department regulations; (3) provides daily meals in a dining room; and (4) exclusively serves meals to residents and their guests as well as community employees.

The bill allows a qualified managed residential community to serve alcoholic liquor, on the community's premises, at (1) a function, occasion, or event and (2) the daily scheduled meals. It requires the community to only sell alcohol (1) to invited individuals and (2) during the specific mealtimes scheduled on the premises. But DCP may waive these requirements permanently if alcohol is only served with daily scheduled meals on-site.

Under the bill, the permit is subject to the hours of sale established under the allowable alcohol times and hours law for on-premises alcohol consumption. By law, with minor exceptions, these allowable hours are between 9:00 a.m. and 1:00 a.m. the next morning on Monday through Thursday, 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 a.m. the next morning for Friday and Saturday, and 10:00 a.m. and 1:00 a.m. the next morning on Sunday.

Under the bill, the annual permit fee is \$1,450.

The bill also makes minor, technical, and conforming changes.

§ 11 — LIQUOR APPLICATIONS

Prohibits DCP from reviewing an initial permit application without all the required documentation; sets procedures for automatic withdrawal of a permit application; eliminates the general requirement for applications publishing notice in a local newspaper; requires a liquor education program to be mandatory for certain key individuals before getting a permit

Initial Application

The bill prohibits DCP from reviewing an initial permit application until the applicant has submitted all documents needed to establish that state and local building, fire, zoning, and sales time requirements will be met.

Under the bill, if the applicant does not submit all of these documents within 30 days of when DCP receives the initial application, or if the documents are not fully executed by the appropriate authorities, then the application is deemed withdrawn and invalid.

Newspaper Notice

The bill eliminates the general requirement that before a permit is granted, applicants must publish local newspaper notices under certain

timeframes detailing the permit type, business location, and whether they will offer live entertainment.

It makes a conforming change in eliminating (1) the publication requirement for amending the type of entertainment, and (2) a deadline in the remonstrance (i.e. objection) process that is tied to the newspaper notice (it instead ties the deadline to the date the applicant posts a placard). By law, applicants are generally required to place placards visible from the road that include certain information.

Liquor Education Program

Under the bill, beginning July 1, 2026, a liquor education program is mandatory for certain individuals. Specifically, in order to get a new permit, transfer a permit, or substitute permittees, the applicant, backers, members of these backers, and permittees must all complete a liquor education program.

The bill requires DCP to create, offer, and conduct the liquor education program in a form and manner it prescribes. The program must address (1) preventing alcohol sales to minors (under age 21) and overservice, (2) restrictions on alcoholic beverage promotions, and (3) any other topics DCP chooses.

However, DCP may waive these requirements in writing. Additionally, those with a provisional or final permit on July 1, 2026, are not required to complete the program to receive a final or renewal permit, respectively.

§ 13 — THC-INFUSED BEVERAGE PERMIT PENALTIES

Allows DCP to impose permit penalties and fine applicants, backers, or permittees for THC-infused beverage violations

The bill allows DCP to suspend, revoke, or refuse to grant or renew a permit for selling alcoholic liquor, or impose a fine of up to \$1,000 per violation, if the department has reasonable cause to believe that the applicant, applicant's backer, backer, or permittee has violated the laws on THC-infused beverages or their adopted regulations.

§ 13 — SETTLEMENT AGREEMENTS

Allows the DCP commissioner to enter into a settlement agreement instead of proceeding to an administrative hearing; eliminates a provision allowing DCP to require a permittee's employees to take an alcohol and training program instead of facing permit suspension or revocation

The bill allows the DCP commissioner to enter into a settlement agreement or a comparable negotiated settlement for Liquor Control Act violations instead of proceeding to an administrative hearing. The agreement may contain provisions imposing settlement fees, probation, suspension, permit conditions, training requirements, or additional security measures.

The bill also eliminates a provision that allows the commissioner to require a permittee to have his or her employees participate in an alcohol and server training program instead of suspending or revoking a permit.

§ 15 — DCP STING OPERATIONS INVOLVING MINORS

Allows DCP to conduct, and DCP and law enforcement agencies to authorize, sting operations involving minors purchasing alcohol

Under current law, law enforcement agencies may conduct an official investigation or enforcement activity that includes inducing a minor to obtain alcohol from an alcoholic liquor permittee (i.e. a sting operation). The bill expands this authority to include DCP and allows both DCP and law enforcement agencies to authorize these operations.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§ 18 — ELIMINATION OF MUNICIPAL RECORDING REQUIREMENT FOR LIQUOR PERMITS

Eliminates the requirement for liquor permits to be filed in duplicate with the applicable town clerk

The bill eliminates the requirement that before a new or renewed liquor permit is active, it be filed in duplicate with the applicable town clerk, which is generally where the business is located.

COMMITTEE ACTION

General Law Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 22 Nay 0 (03/24/2025)

