
OLR Bill Analysis

sHB 6854 (as amended by House "A")*

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

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

SUMMARY

§ 1 — CASE BOTTLE QUANTITIES

Expands the quantities and numbers of bottles allowed in a case of alcoholic liquor to reflect federal regulations on container size

§§ 2-9, 12-14 & 16 — 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

§ 9 — 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

§§ 10, 18 & 19 — 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

§ 11 — CONCESSION PERMIT

Allows a concession permittee to sell prepackaged canned beverages containing spirits of up to 6% ABV

§ 12 — TEMPORARY AUCTION PERMIT

Increases (1) how long a temporary auction permit is valid from up to three consecutive days to a total of 12 days in a calendar year and (2) how many times DCP may issue the permit to an auctioneer from 4 to 12 times a calendar year

§ 13 — 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

§ 15 — THC-INFUSED BEVERAGE PERMIT PENALTIES

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

§ 15 — DCP 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 server training program instead of facing permit suspension or revocation

§ 17 — DCP STING OPERATIONS INVOLVING MINORS

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

§ 20 — CONVERSION TO RESTAURANT PERMIT WITHOUT PLACARDING

Allows, for one year, certain cafe and restaurant permittees for wine and beer to convert their permit to a restaurant permit without being required to follow the placarding requirements

§ 21 — ELIMINATION OF MUNICIPAL RECORDING REQUIREMENT FOR LIQUOR PERMITS

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

SUMMARY

This bill makes various unrelated changes to the Liquor Control Act, including many minor, technical, and conforming changes.

*House Amendment "A" (1) adds the provisions on case bottle quantities, concession permits, temporary auction permits, and converting to a restaurant permit without placarding; (2) moves up the effective date of the mandatory liquor education program, from July 1, 2026, to January 1, 2026; and (3) makes various minor, technical, and conforming changes.

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

§ 1 — CASE BOTTLE QUANTITIES

Expands the quantities and numbers of bottles allowed in a case of alcoholic liquor to reflect federal regulations on container size

Existing law establishes the quantity and number (standards of fill) of bottles generally allowed in a case of alcoholic liquor (other than beer, cocktails, cordials, prepared mixed drinks, and wines). The bill expands the allowable quantities and numbers of bottles to reflect federal regulations on authorized container sizes (27 C.F.R. § 5.203). The table below shows the additional bottle case quantities allowed under the bill.

Table: Allowable Quantity by Bottle Size Under the Bill

Quantity	Bottle Size
6	3.75 liters, 3 liters, 2 liters, 1.5 liters, and 945 milliliters (mL)
12	710 mL, 570 mL, 500 mL, and 475 mL
24	355 mL, 350 mL, and 331 mL
48	250 mL and 187 mL

§§ 2-9, 12-14 & 16 — 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 (e.g., beer, wine, and spirits) as well as sell and serve it on certain boats and livery services (e.g., limousines).

The bill allows the daily permittee, with Department of Consumer Protection (DCP) approval, to 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 day 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.

§ 9 — 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 does not have to sell any particular type of grocery item.

The bill also specifies (1) 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 and (2) additional examples of different foods that are considered groceries (e.g., dairy products, eggs, and fruit).

§§ 10, 18 & 19 — 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 its premises.

Under the bill, a qualified managed residential community is generally a facility consisting of private residential units in 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.

The bill sets a \$1,450 fee for the annual permit.

§ 11 — CONCESSION PERMIT

Allows a concession permittee to sell prepackaged canned beverages containing spirits of up to 6% ABV

The bill allows a concession permittee to sell canned beverages containing spirits of up to 6% alcohol by volume (ABV). The spirit must be combined with other nonalcoholic ingredients that the manufacturers premix and package in original containers, and the permittee must not mix or adulterate the product.

§ 12 — TEMPORARY AUCTION PERMIT

Increases (1) how long a temporary auction permit is valid from up to three consecutive days to a total of 12 days in a calendar year and (2) how many times DCP may issue the permit to an auctioneer from 4 to 12 times a calendar year

The bill increases how long a temporary auction permit is valid from up to three consecutive days to a total of 12 days in a calendar year. As under existing law, each permit is valid for one auction.

The bill also increases how many times DCP may issue the permit to an auctioneer from 4 to 12 times a calendar year.

By law, an “auctioneer” is anyone who (1) regularly provides professional services by auctioning items for sale and (2) does not hold an alcoholic liquor permit. An “individual collector” is anyone who is not a backer; permittee; or a backer’s director, officer, or employee.

§ 13 — 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 after 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 by 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 generally must place placards visible from the road that include certain information.

Liquor Education Program

Beginning January 1, 2026, the bill makes a liquor education program mandatory for certain individuals. Specifically, 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 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 January 1, 2026, do not need to complete the program to receive a final or renewal permit, respectively.

§ 15 — 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 it has reasonable cause to believe that the applicant, applicant's backer, backer, or permittee has violated the laws or regulations on THC-infused beverages.

§ 15 — DCP 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 server 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 have provisions imposing settlement fees, probation, permit suspension or conditions, training requirements, or additional security measures.

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

§ 17 — 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

§ 20 — CONVERSION TO RESTAURANT PERMIT WITHOUT PLACARDING

Allows, for one year, certain cafe and restaurant permittees for wine and beer to convert their permit to a restaurant permit without being required to follow the placarding requirements

Regardless of any provision in the Liquor Control Act, the bill allows, from July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026, certain cafe permittees or restaurant permittees for wine and beer to apply to DCP to convert their permit to a restaurant permit without needing to follow the placarding requirements (e.g., post certain information visible from the road). The DCP commissioner must prescribe how the permittees apply for the conversion.

The cafe permits that qualify for the conversion exemption are those that have a suitable space in a permanent building, vessel, or structure that is held out to the public as a place where alcoholic liquor and food is served at retail for on-premises consumption. They cannot have public sleeping accommodations and do not need to serve hot meals or have a kitchen or dining room, but must employ an adequate number of employees.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025

§ 21 — 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)