

HCS HB 547 & 752 -- TRANSPORT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

SPONSOR: Schroer

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Special Committee on Small Business by a vote of 15 to 2. Voted "Do Pass" by Rules-Legislative Oversight by a vote 9 to 0.

The following is a summary of the House Committee Substitute for HB 547.

This bill allows restaurants to furnish one time use, tamperproof bags with seals to let patrons take specified alcoholic beverages with them. Bottles of wine and other beverages must have been ordered and partially consumed during a meal and the restaurant must provide a receipt, either paper or electronic. (Section 311.101)

Additionally, the bill allows anyone licensed to sell intoxicating liquor at retail by the drink for on-premises consumption to sell retailer-packaged alcoholic beverages to customers for off-premises consumption when the alcoholic beverage is purchased simultaneous with a meal. The alcoholic beverage must be in a sealable tamperproof container or placed in a tamperproof, transparent bag. The patron must be provided with a paper or electronic receipt. The employee filling the container must be 21 years of age, the container shall not exceed 128 ounces, and a customer can only purchase two alcoholic beverages per meal (Section 311.202).

The following is a summary of the public testimony from the committee hearing. The testimony was based on the introduced version of the bill.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that the bill is a critical life-line for the restaurant industry to survive. In Missouri the restaurant industry employs over 300,000 individuals and we need these people working and not unemployed. Missouri box stores were able to stay open during this pandemic and restaurants who took all precautions necessary to stay opened were forced to close, forcing many small businesses to go out of business. The restaurant industry is the biggest employer in the state and needs to be allowed to prosper.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Schroer; Missouri Hotel & Lodging Association, and California Wines.

OPPONENTS: Those who oppose the bill say that they empathize with the COVID problem but the state shouldn't allow people the chance to drink and drive. The state won't be able to track where a person had their last drink if they have an accident. The state

needs to make sure people can't get to the beverage; some states require the drinks be placed in the trunk of a vehicle and that way the driver can't get to it until they get to their destination.

Testifying against the bill were Michael Boland, Mothers Against Drunk Driving and Missouri Retailers Association.