

SB 585 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Business and General Government

Action Date: 04/02/19
Action: Do pass with amendments and requesting referral to Ways and Means.
(Printed A-Engrossed.)
Vote: 4-0-1-0
Yeas: 4 - Dembrow, Girod, Hass, Riley
Exc: 1 - Olsen
Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued
Revenue: No revenue impact
Prepared By: Tyler Larson, LPRO Analyst
Meeting Dates: 2/28, 4/2

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Directs Oregon Liquor Control Commission (OLCC) to establish Cannabis Responsible Retailer Program to assist marijuana retailers in avoiding sales of marijuana items to minors. Prohibits OLCC from imposing discipline on participating marijuana retailer based on sales of marijuana items to minors by employees. Takes effect on 91st day following adjournment sine die.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Intent to create a program for marijuana retailers that mirrors the OLCC's Responsible Vendor Program for alcohol retailers
- Potential cost of participation in the Cannabis Responsible Retailer Program and provision of training to retailers

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

Narrows scope of program to avoiding sales of marijuana items to minors.

BACKGROUND:

Oregonians voted to legalize the production, sale, and consumption of medical marijuana in 1998 and recreational marijuana in 2014. The Oregon Liquor Control Commission (OLCC) began issuing recreational marijuana licenses in April 2016. According to the OLCC, there are currently over 500 licensed recreational marijuana retailers in the state.

The OLCC administers a Responsible Vendor Program (RVP) for alcohol retailers. Retail licensees who join the RVP and maintain all the requirements are eligible for reduced sanctions if their employees sell alcohol to a minor or fail to properly check identification, and are protected from license suspension or denial of a license. The RVP requires retailers to provide ongoing training to employees, accept only certain forms of ID, adopt specified policies, post specified signs on the premises, and keep records verifying compliance with the program requirements. A 2007 independent research study found that sales to minors "were significantly less likely at RVP outlets (25%) than non-RVP outlets (39%)."

Senate Bill 585-A requires the OLCC to establish a Cannabis Responsible Retailer Program. The program must include a list of positive measures that a licensed recreational retailer must take in order to remain in compliance with laws and rules, and the OLCC must allow any licensed retailer to participate in the program. The OLCC may not revoke, suspend, or deny issuance of a license to a participating retailer based on sales to minors by employees.