
SENATE BILL 5260

State of Washington

64th Legislature

2015 Regular Session

By Senators Honeyford and Hewitt

1 AN ACT Relating to exempting cider makers from the wine
2 commission assessment; amending RCW 66.24.215; creating a new
3 section; providing an effective date; and declaring an emergency.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that the commodity
6 assessment authorized in RCW 66.24.215 is applied to makers of cider
7 as defined in RCW 66.24.210 but by definition is focused on the
8 marketing and support of vinifera wine grape growers and vinifera
9 wine producers. The rapid growth and strong market potential of the
10 Washington cider industry require marketing efforts that are focused
11 on cider products as a unique beverage category. The legislature
12 intends to allow cider makers to support their own marketing efforts,
13 which will benefit the cider industry by exempting them from an
14 assessment that primarily supports vinifera wine.

15 **Sec. 2.** RCW 66.24.215 and 1988 c 257 s 7 are each amended to
16 read as follows:

17 (1) To provide for permanent funding of the wine commission after
18 July 1, 1989, agricultural commodity assessments (~~shall~~) must be
19 levied by the board on wine producers and growers as follows:

1 (a) Beginning on July 1, 1989, the assessment on wine producers
2 (~~shall be~~) is two cents per gallon on sales of packaged Washington
3 wines.

4 (b) Beginning on July 1, 1989, the assessment on growers of
5 Washington vinifera wine grapes (~~shall be~~) is levied as provided in
6 RCW 15.88.130.

7 (c) After July 1, 1993, assessment rates under subsection (1)(a)
8 of this section may be changed pursuant to a referendum conducted by
9 the Washington wine commission and approved by a majority vote of
10 wine producers. The weight of each producer's vote (~~shall~~) must be
11 equal to the percentage of that producer's share of Washington
12 vinifera wine production in the prior year.

13 (d) After July 1, 1993, assessment amounts under subsection
14 (1)(b) of this section may be changed pursuant to a referendum
15 conducted by the Washington wine commission and approved by a
16 majority vote of grape growers. The weight of each grower's vote
17 (~~shall~~) must be equal to the percentage of that grower's share of
18 Washington vinifera grape sales in the prior year.

19 (e) After July 1, 2015, the assessment amounts under this section
20 may not be levied on the production of cider as defined in RCW
21 66.24.210.

22 (2) Assessments collected under this section (~~shall~~) must be
23 disbursed quarterly to the Washington wine commission for use in
24 carrying out the purposes of chapter 15.88 RCW.

25 (3) Prior to July 1, 1996, a referendum (~~shall~~) must be
26 conducted to determine whether to continue the Washington wine
27 commission as representing both wine producers and grape growers. The
28 voting (~~shall~~) may not be weighted. The wine producers (~~shall~~)
29 must vote whether to continue the commission's coverage of wineries
30 and wine production. The grape producers (~~shall~~) must vote whether
31 to continue the commission's coverage of issues pertaining to grape
32 growing. If a majority of both wine and grape producers favor the
33 continuation of the commission, the assessments (~~shall~~) must
34 continue as provided in subsection (2)(b) and (d) of this section. If
35 only one group of producers favors the continuation, the assessments
36 (~~shall~~) may only be levied on the group which favored the
37 continuation.

38 NEW SECTION. Sec. 3. This act is necessary for the immediate
39 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of

1 the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes
2 effect July 1, 2015.

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