

Senate Commerce Committee

Declan Donahue 271-3324

SB 87-FN, relative to one day liquor license requirements and making salons and barber shops eligible for on-premise licenses.

Hearing Date: February 4, 2025

Time Opened: 10:30 a.m.

Time Closed: 10:42 a.m.

Members of the Committee Present: Senators Innis, Ricciardi, Murphy, McGough, Fenton and Reardon

Bill Analysis: This bill allows for-profit organizations to receive a one day liquor license and makes barber shops, salons, and spas eligible for on-premises licenses.

Sponsors:

Sen. Watters
Sen. McGough

Sen. Murphy
Rep. C. McGuire

Sen. Innis

Who supports the bill: Senator David Watters

Who is neutral on the bill: Mark Armaganian and Danielle Ellston (NH Liquor Commission)

Summary of testimony presented in support:

Senator Watters

This bill would enable tasting style events, as well as make legal common practices of serving alcohol at salons and barber shops. We already have similar licenses for nonprofit event liquor licenses, but if you are a for-profit business these licenses are not available to you. By no longer requiring a license to hold one-day events that serve alcohol, and replacing it with a requirement for approval by the Liquor Commission, there is a greater breadth of places that can have events like tastings. Salons and barber shops often serve liquor, and this bill would not make them subject to law enforcement.

Neutral Information Presented:

Mark Armaganian and Danielle Ellston, NH Liquor Commission

Senator Murphy asked if there are fees for the new types of licenses assessed in SB 87-FN. Chief Armaganian stated they wanted to come up with a fee schedule because it

takes money to do inspections. Deputy Director Ellston added the fee is \$1,200 for a full cocktail lounge, but there is a tiered system going all the way down to \$100. These fees change depending on the type of license: one-day, yearlong, etc. Murphy then asked about Page 2, Line 11, which would allow the license holder to serve liquor for free, which would conflict with existing RSAs preventing the giving away of alcohol. Deputy Director Ellston stated this would mirror other license types on what can be served. Senator Murphy then asked if the Liquor Commission can consolidate the number of license types. Chief Armaganian stated it was 52, they're down to 48, and will be working on cleanup bills before recodifying the chapter.

Senator Fenton asked if food is required to be served with these types of licenses. Chief states the majority of license types require a percentage of food to be served. Senator Fenton asked if under Page 1, Line 25, what would necessitate the suspension of a one-day license. Deputy Director Ellston stated it would be for one-day licenses, should it fine the event is out of control, minors were being served, or something else that violates the law or terms of the license. For yearlong and similar licenses, there is the opportunity for hearings, but for a one-day license it would need to be shut down over such violations. Chief Armaganian stressed local control is prioritized, and these processes would be made in consultation with the municipality before approval and are done much more quickly than in the past.

Senator Innis noted on Line 11, there are a number of requirements needed to begin the process for an applicant, which would ensure protections.

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Date Hearing Report completed: February 7, 2025