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HOUSE BILL NO. 1325

Offered January 22, 2010

A *BILL to amend and reenact § 4.1-235 of the Code of Virginia, relating to alcoholic beverage control; collection of taxes, etc.; markup of spirits.*

Patron—Albo

Referred to Committee on General Laws

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 4.1-235 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 4.1-235. Collection; computation, distribution of tax on wine and other alcoholic beverages; refunds and adjustments.

A. The Board shall collect the state taxes levied pursuant to § 4.1-234 as follows:

1. Collection shall be from the purchaser at the time of or prior to sale, except as to sales made to wholesale wine licensees. Wholesale wine licensees shall collect the taxes at the time of or prior to sale to retail licensees, and shall remit such taxes monthly to the Board, along with such reports as may be required by the Board, at the time and in the manner prescribed by the Board.

2. In establishing the prices for items sold by it to persons other than wholesale licensees, the Board shall include a reasonable markup, *subject to the requirements of subsection E*. The liter tax or twenty percent tax, as appropriate, shall then be added to the price of each container of alcoholic beverages. The four percent tax on vermouth and farm winery wines shall then be added for those products. In all cases the final price for each container may be established so as to be a multiple of five.

In accounting for the state tax on sales the Board shall divide the net sales for the quarter by 1.20 and multiply the result by twenty percent. As to the sale of vermouth and farm winery wine, the Board shall divide the net sales for the quarter by 1.04 and multiply the result by four percent.

B. The amount of tax collected under this section during each quarter shall, within fifty days after the close of such quarter, be certified to the Comptroller by the Board and shall be transferred by him from the special fund described in § 4.1-116 to the general fund of the state treasury. The Board shall, not later than June 20 of every year, estimate the yield of the state tax on sales imposed by § 4.1-234 for the quarter ending June 30 and certify the amount of such estimate to the Comptroller, whereupon the Comptroller shall, before the end of the month, transfer the amount of such estimate from the special fund described in § 4.1-116 to the general fund of the state treasury, subject to such adjustment on account of an overestimate or underestimate as may be indicated within fifty days after the close of the quarter ending on June 30.

Forty-four percent of the amount derived from the liter tax levied pursuant to § 4.1-234 shall be transferred to the general fund and paid to the several counties, cities, and towns of the Commonwealth in proportion to their respective populations, and is appropriated for such purpose.

The counties, cities, and towns shall in no event receive from the taxes derived from the sale of wines less revenue than was received by such counties, cities, and towns for the year ending June 30, 1976.

Twelve percent of the amount derived from the liter tax levied shall be retained by the Board as operating revenue and distributed as provided in § 4.1-117.

C. As used in this section, the term "net sales" means gross sales less refunds to customers.

D. The Board may make a refund or adjustment of any tax paid to it under this section when (i) the wine upon which such tax has been paid has been condemned and is not permitted to be sold in the Commonwealth, or (ii) wine is returned by a retail licensee to a wholesale wine licensee for refund in accordance with Board regulations or approval. Any claim for such refund or adjustment shall be made to the Board in the report filed with the Board by the wholesale wine licensee for the period in which such return and refund occurs.

E. *Before implementing any increase in the markup of spirits, the Board shall conduct a study that assesses the economic impact of any such increase on its sales and profits and issue a written report detailing its findings. The economic impact analysis also shall include (i) the impact of any increase on manufacturers of spirits sold by the Board, on mixed beverage licensees, and on consumers; and (ii) comparisons of spirits pricing by the Board with wholesale and retail outlets in border states and on military installations located in the Commonwealth. The Board shall provide interested parties, including manufacturers, mixed beverage licensees, and consumers, an opportunity to comment on the economic impact analysis before the Board issues a final report. The Board shall prepare and forward to the Governor and the General Assembly a copy of its final report.*

INTRODUCED

HB1325