

Legislative Analysis



UNIVERSITY LIQUOR LICENSES

Phone: (517) 373-8080
<http://www.house.mi.gov/hfa>

Senate Bill 789 (S-1) as reported from House committee

Sponsor: Sen. Jeff Irwin

House Committee: Regulatory Reform

Senate Committee: Regulatory Affairs

Complete to 6-12-24

Analysis available at
<http://www.legislature.mi.gov>

(Enacted as Public Act 115 of 2024)

SUMMARY:

Senate Bill 789 would amend the Liquor Control Code to modify different provisions related to the issuance of liquor licenses in connection with university property.

Eastern Michigan University License

The bill would allow the Michigan Liquor Control Commission (MLCC) to issue a license to a private entity for the sale of alcoholic liquor on the licensed premises of a restaurant on land owned by Eastern Michigan University if all of the following apply:

- The land is leased or subleased at fair market value to a private entity that owns, leases, or subleases the licensed premises for the operation of a restaurant.
- The restaurant is located in an area designated for industrial, research, or commercial development by the governing board of the university.
- The license was originally acquired on the open market at fair market value.

Conference Center Licensing

The act now allows the MLCC to issue a license to a college or university's governing board for the sale of alcoholic liquor for consumption on the premises of a *conference center* at regularly scheduled conference center activities.

The bill would update which buildings are included in the act's definition of *conference center* as follows:

- For Eastern Michigan University, the bill would add the student center to the list of included buildings and update the reference to the convocation center to its current name (the George Gervin GameAbove Center).¹
- For Ferris State University, the bill would replace the Conference Center at Big Rapids and the Applied Technology Center at Grand Rapids with the Woodbridge N. Ferris Building at Grand Rapids and the David L. Eisler Center at Big Rapids, respectively. The bill would also remove the FSU GR Conference Center of Grand Rapids Junior College from the list of included buildings.

MCL 436.1513

¹ <https://emueagles.com/facilities/gervin-gameabove-center/1>

BRIEF DISCUSSION:

According to committee testimony, the bill would allow for a liquor license for an offsite restaurant project being developed by Eastern Michigan University. In addition, the bill adds a license for the university's student center because of the number of events hosted by the venue.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Senate Bill 789 would not have a fiscal impact on the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs, since the bill has a highly limited scope.

POSITIONS:

Representatives of the following entities indicated support for the bill:

- Eastern Michigan University (5-21-24)
- Toney Group (5-21-24)
- Ferris State University (6-11-24)

The Liquor Control Commission indicated a neutral position on the bill. (5-21-24)

Legislative Analyst: Alex Stegbauer
Fiscal Analyst: Marcus Coffin

■ This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House Fiscal Agency staff for use by House members in their deliberations and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.