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An Act Regarding Liquor Licenses for Qualified Catering Services

Emergency preamble. Whereas, acts and resolves of the Legislature do not become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

Whereas, current law requires clarification with regard to licenses for qualified caterers who own freestanding event halls; and

Whereas, opportunities for business expansion and employment opportunities are hampered by this need for clarification; and

Whereas, in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within the meaning of the Constitution of Maine and require the following legislation as immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety; now, therefore,

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 28-A MRSA §1076, sub-§10 is enacted to read:

10. Self-sponsored event permit. The bureau may issue a self-sponsored event permit to a qualified catering service in addition to a license issued in accordance with this section. A self-sponsored event permit authorizes the licensee to serve spirits, wine and malt liquor at an event sponsored by the licensee at the facility that is the licensee's principal place of business as a qualified catering service. The permit allows for up to 100 self-sponsored events per year under the following conditions:

A. The licensee submits an application as prescribed by the bureau;

B. The primary business of the licensee does not involve serving alcoholic beverages on a day-to-day basis at self-sponsored events;

C. The licensee notifies the bureau of a self-sponsored event a minimum of 3 business days prior to the event by first class mail, facsimile transmission, electronic mail or other method prescribed by the bureau;

D. The licensee provides at a self-sponsored event a diverse selection of food, primarily prepared from a complete kitchen at the licensee's facility and served at multiple food stations or a buffet service or passed by servers or served as a plated sit-down meal. The selection of food must include more than snack foods such as potato chips, crackers, pretzels or nuts, but snack foods may be used in the preparation of a meal or as an accompaniment to a prepared meal;

E. If liquor is served later than 9:00 p.m. at a self-sponsored event and after the service of food described in paragraph D is complete, the licensee continues to offer food, which may be lighter than a buffet service or a sit-down meal, such as sandwiches and pizza;

F. Self-sponsored events are public or private events requiring an admission fee for the service of food and beverages by the licensee that may include visual or participatory entertainment provided by the licensee in accordance with the laws and rules governing this Title; and

G. Self-sponsored events do not exceed 7 hours.

The license fee for a self-sponsored event permit is \$700 annually. Renewal of a permit under this subsection must coincide with renewal of the license issued in accordance with this section.

Emergency clause. In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this legislation takes effect when approved.

Effective 90 days following adjournment of the 124th
Legislature, Second Regular Session, unless otherwise indicated.