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HB 189: Sale of Alcohol by Persons Under 21 Sponsor Statement

HB189 would aim to change existing Alaska statutes, that would allow employees between the ages of 18 and 20 to sell, serve, deliver, and dispense alcohol within restaurants and other specified license and endorsement types under appropriate supervision. This bill also modifies hours that a theater license holder may serve alcohol and updates alcohol warning signs content to include warnings against certain types of cancer.

Alaska is one of just three states that require employees to be over the age of 21 to sell, serve, dispense, and deliver alcohol, while 39 states allow servers to be 18-20. HB189 would create positive change by tackling labor shortages and a high rate of turnover in industries affected by this bill. Now, 18- to 20-year-olds who wish to work in these industries will have the opportunity to move into positions that increase their earning potential. Expanding the potential workforce strengthens businesses, allowing them to operate at full capacity, leading to greater economic contributions overall.

Many establishments already implement robust training programs to ensure responsible alcohol service practices. These measures, combined with on-site supervision, could effectively ensure responsible service by young adults within these industries.

With adequate training and supervision, employees aged 18-20 can responsibly and safely handle alcohol sales and service in a controlled restaurant environment. This change would benefit Alaska's economy, alleviate labor shortages, and promote fairness within our service industry.