

Office of the Governor
State of Louisiana

JOHN BEL EDWARDS
GOVERNOR



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November 11, 2020

VIA HAND DELIVERY

Honorable Page Cortez
Louisiana Senate President
Louisiana State Senate
Post Office Box 94183
Baton Rouge, LA 70804

RE: Veto of Senate Bill 18 of the Second Extraordinary Session

Dear President Cortez:

Please be advised that I have vetoed Senate Bill 18 of the Second Extraordinary Session.

This bill purported to provide financial relief for certain alcohol manufacturer and retail sales permit holders by allowing a permit holder's 2021 permit fees to be reduced on a pro rata basis if that permit holder was required to temporarily close operations pursuant to any of the governor's COVID-19 proclamations. The language of the bill is unclear on what "required to temporarily close operations" means. Even during the most restrictive Stay at Home orders, businesses holding these permits were only required to be closed to the public and in fact were able to be open for other business purposes. Although well-intentioned, clear reading of the language would likely not provide the relief to businesses that Senator Cathey sought through passage of the bill. Furthermore, assuming for argument's sake that the language could be construed so liberally as to allow permit holders to apply current year permit fees to next year's permit renewals, the Office of Alcohol and Tobacco Control would likely be heavily impacted because they are a self-generated revenue funded agency and would not collect revenue that their current budget is based upon.

I have, however, signed into law Senate Bill 72 of the Second Extraordinary Session, which became Act 60. This bill provides an income tax credit based on permit amounts for those businesses Senator Cathey was attempting to provide aid for in Senate Bill 18.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Bel Edwards".

John Bel Edwards
Governor

cc: Honorable Clay Schexnayder
Speaker of the House of Representatives