

A Bill for an Act Relating to the Licensing of Certain Sellers.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Hawaii:

SECTION 1. Section 237-9, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended to read as follows:

“§237-9 Licenses; penalty. (a) [Any] Except as provided in this section, any person who [shall have] has a gross income or gross proceeds of sales or value of products upon which a privilege tax is imposed by this chapter, as a condition precedent to engaging or continuing in such business, shall in writing apply for and obtain from the department of taxation, upon a one-time payment of the sum of \$20, a license to engage in and to conduct such business, upon condition that the person shall pay the taxes accruing to the State under this chapter, and the person shall thereby be duly licensed to engage in and conduct the business. Any person licensed or holding a license under this chapter before January 1, 1990, shall pay a one-time license renewal fee of \$20 on or before January 31, 1990, as a condition precedent to engaging or continuing in business. The license shall not be transferable and shall be valid only for the person in whose name it is issued and for the transaction of business at the place designated therein. The license may be inspected and examined, and shall at all times be conspicuously displayed at the place for which it is issued.

(b) Licenses and applications therefor shall be in such form as the department shall prescribe, except that where the licensee is engaged in two or more forms of business of different classification, the license shall so state on its face. The license provided for by this section shall be effective until canceled in writing. Any application for the reissuance of a previously canceled license identification number after December 31, 1989, shall be regarded as a new license application and subject to the payment of the one-time license fee of \$20. The director may revoke or cancel any license issued under this chapter for cause as provided by rules adopted pursuant to chapter 91.

(c) If the license fee is paid, the department shall not refuse to issue a license or revoke or cancel a license for the exercise of a privilege protected by the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States, or for the carrying on of interstate or foreign commerce, or for any privilege the exercise of which, under the Constitution and laws of the United States, cannot be restrained on account of nonpayment of taxes, nor shall section 237-46 be invoked to restrain the exercise of such a privilege, or the carrying on of such commerce.

(d) The director may permit a person engaged in network marketing, multi-level marketing, or other similar business to obtain the license required under this section for purposes of becoming a tax collection agent on behalf of its direct sellers. The tax collection agent shall report, collect, and pay over the taxes due under this chapter and chapter 238 on behalf of its direct sellers who are covered by the tax collection agreement. The tax collection agent's direct sellers shall be deemed to be licensed under this chapter; provided that the licensure shall apply solely to the business activity conducted directly through the marketing arrangement. Under this section, a tax collection agent shall:

- (1) Notify all of its direct sellers making sales in the State that it has been designated to collect, report, and pay over the tax imposed by this chapter and chapter 238 on their behalf on the business activity conducted through the marketing arrangement;

- (2) If required by the director as a condition of obtaining the license, furnish with the annual return, a list (including identification numbers) of all direct sellers for the taxable year who have been provided (by the tax collection agent) information returns required under section 6041A of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, and any other information that is relevant to ensure proper payment of taxes due under this section; and
- (3) Be personally liable for the taxes due and collected under the tax collection agreement if taxes are collected, but not reported or paid, together with penalties and interest as provided by law.

(e) For the purposes of this section:

“Consumer product” shall include tangible consumer products and intangible consumer services.

“Direct seller” means any person who is engaged in the trade or business of selling (or soliciting the sale of) consumer products:

- (1) To any buyer on a buy-sell basis, a deposit-commission basis, or any similar basis, that the director prescribes by rule adopted pursuant to chapter 91, for resale other than in a permanent retail establishment;
- (2) Other than in a permanent retail establishment; provided that:
- (A) Substantially all the remuneration (whether or not paid in cash) for the sale of consumer products is directly related to sales or other output rather than to the number of hours worked; and
- (B) The sales of consumer products by the person are performed pursuant to a written contract that provides that the person will not be treated as an employee with respect to those sales for federal or state tax purposes.

“Direct seller” includes individuals who realize remuneration dependent on the productivity of other individuals in the marketing arrangement.

“Network marketing” or “multi-level marketing” means a marketing arrangement in which consumer products are distributed and sold to or through direct sellers.”

SECTION 2. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed. New statutory material is underscored.

SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect upon approval.

(Approved July 2, 1998.)