By:  Goldman (Senate Sponsor - Miles) H.B. No. 2399

(In the Senate - Received from the House April 29, 2019; April 29, 2019, read first time and referred to Committee on Business & Commerce; May 20, 2019, reported favorably by the following vote: Yeas 8, Nays 0; May 20, 2019, sent to printer.)

COMMITTEE VOTE

                    Yea Nay Absent  PNV

Hancock              X

Nichols              X

Campbell             X

Creighton                      X

Menéndez             X

Paxton               X

Schwertner           X

Whitmire             X

Zaffirini            X

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the use of a biometric identity verification device to verify the age of an individual purchasing an alcoholic beverage.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1.  Section 1.04, Alcoholic Beverage Code, is amended by adding Subdivision (29) to read as follows:

(29)  "Biometric identity verification device" means a device that instantly verifies the identity and age of a person by:

(A)  taking an electronic scan of a biometric identifier of the person, including a scan of a fingerprint, an iris, the face, or another biometric identifier; and

(B)  referencing the scan of the identifier against a record of biometric identifiers associated with government-issued identification documents where:

(i)  the authenticity of the record was previously verified by an electronic authentication process;

(ii)  the identity of and information about the record holder was previously verified through a secondary electronic authentication process or process using commercially available data such as a public records query or a knowledge-based authentication quiz; and

(iii)  the authenticated record is securely linked to biometric identifiers contemporaneously collected from the verified record holder and stored in a central, highly secured, encrypted biometric identifier database.

SECTION 2.  Section 106.03, Alcoholic Beverage Code, is amended by amending Subsection (b) and adding Subsection (b-1) to read as follows:

(b)  A person who sells a minor an alcoholic beverage does not commit an offense if:

(1)  the minor falsely represents that the minor is [~~himself to be~~] 21 years old or older by displaying an apparently valid proof of identification that contains a physical description and photograph consistent with the minor's appearance, purports to establish that the minor is 21 years of age or older, and was issued by a governmental agency; or

(2)  the person relies on a verification by a biometric identity verification device as proof of identification and that the minor is 21 years of age or older.

(b-1)  The proof of identification under Subsection (b)(1) may include a driver's license or identification card issued by the Department of Public Safety, a passport, or a military identification card.

SECTION 3.  Section 106.13(c), Alcoholic Beverage Code, is amended to read as follows:

(c)  The commission or administrator may relax the provisions of this section concerning suspension and cancellation and assess a sanction the commission or administrator finds just under the circumstances if, at a hearing, the licensee or permittee establishes to the satisfaction of the commission or administrator:

(1)  that the violation could not reasonably have been prevented by the permittee or licensee by the exercise of due diligence;

(2)  that the permittee or licensee was entrapped; [~~or~~]

(3)  that an agent, servant, or employee of the permittee or licensee violated this code without the knowledge of the permittee or licensee; or

(4)  that the permittee or licensee or an agent, servant, or employee of the permittee or licensee relied on a biometric identity verification device to verify the individual's age.

SECTION 4.  Sections 109.61(a), (b-1), (e), and (f), Alcoholic Beverage Code, are amended to read as follows:

(a) A person may access electronically readable information on a driver's license, commercial driver's license, or identification certificate or provided through a biometric identity verification device for the purpose of complying with this code or a rule of the commission, including for the purpose of preventing the person from committing an offense under this code.

(b-1)  Information retained may be printed to hard copy with a time and date confirmation from the transaction scan device or biometric identity verification device or transferred to an electronic encrypted data storage or electronic record. After printing or transferring data, the transaction scan device or biometric identity verification device may clear the scanned information from the device or any memory in the device. The commission by rule may set further requirements for the retention of information under this subsection.

(e)  It is an affirmative defense to prosecution under this code, for an offense having as an element the age of a person, that:

(1)  a transaction scan device identified the license or certificate of the purchaser as valid and that the person is over 21, or a biometric identity verification device verified that the person is 21 years of age or older, and the defendant accessed the information and relied on the results in good faith; or

(2)  if the defendant is the owner of a store in which alcoholic beverages are sold at retail, the offense occurs in connection with a sale by an employee of the owner, and the owner had provided the employee with:

(A)  a transaction scan device or biometric identity verification device in working condition;

(B)  adequate training in the use of the transaction scan device or biometric identity verification device; and

(C)  the defendant did not directly or indirectly encourage the employee to violate the law.

(f)  The defense offered in Subsection (e) applies [~~does not apply~~] in actions to cancel, deny, or suspend the license or permit, except as provided by rules adopted by the commission under Section 5.31.

SECTION 5.  The changes in law made by this Act apply only to an offense committed on or after the effective date of this Act. An offense committed before the effective date of this Act is governed by the law in effect on the date the offense was committed, and the former law is continued in effect for that purpose. For purposes of this section, an offense was committed before the effective date of this Act if any element of the offense was committed before that date.

SECTION 6.  This Act takes effect September 1, 2019.

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