

Senate approves curbside pickup for alcohol, to-go cocktails

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The state Senate today approved legislation to allow curbside pickup of alcohol purchased online or over the phone.

It also signed off 28-2 on a bill that would allow bars and restaurants to sell to-go cocktails, clearing the way for that legislation to head to the gov's desk.

The curbside bill, which would ban municipalities from imposing additional restrictions on the sales, wasn't originally on the Senate's calendar today. But GOP leaders pulled SB 56 to the floor after it passed out of committee last week unanimously.

The Senate signed off on some changes to the bill before sending it to the Assembly. That includes requiring that the alcohol be in "original unopened packages or containers." Also, retailers would be banned from selling alcohol for curbside pickup outside of the normal hours that they're allowed to sell alcohol.

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The Assembly last week approved AB 32, which allows to-go cocktails and wine in to-go containers for consumption elsewhere. Under the bill, the establishments would have to put the drinks in a container with a tamper-evident seal.

Sponsors introduced the legislation as a way to help bars and restaurants hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic.

AB 32 also wasn't originally on the Senate calendar. The Wisconsin Grocers Association had opposed the bill ahead of the Assembly vote, arguing it should've been taken up alongside other alcohol-related legislation, including the curbside pickup proposal the Senate approved today.