

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2017 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader

House Bill 712
Economic Matters

(Charles County Delegation)

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Charles County - Alcoholic Beverages - Selling to Underage Individual - Penalties

This bill authorizes the Charles County Board of License Commissioners to determine the fine imposed on a license holder for the first violation, by a license holder or an employee of a license holder, of a specified provision of the Alcoholic Beverages Article that prohibits the selling or providing of alcoholic beverages to an individual under age 21.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2017.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None.

Local Effect: Charles County revenues increase as a result of being authorized to increase the maximum fine. Expenditures are not affected.

Small Business Effect: Potential meaningful.

Analysis

Current Law: In Charles County, if a license holder or an employee of a license holder violates the prohibition against selling or providing alcoholic beverages to an individual under the age of 21, for the first offense, the board may impose on the license holder a fine of up to \$750, a suspension of the license for up to three days, or both. For each subsequent offense, the board may impose on the license holder a penalty established by the board. In all cases, the board may impose a fine of up to \$500 on an employee of a license holder.

Background: Charles County advises that first-time offenses by licensees have recently increased. In 2016, there were 34 citations issued to licensees for selling or providing alcoholic beverages to an individual under the age of 21 in Charles County, 17 of which were first offenses. As a result, Charles County intends to increase the maximum fine for a first offense from \$750 to \$2,500 in order to deter future violations. In fiscal 2016, Charles County advises that fines ranged from \$500 to \$2,500 for subsequent violations, depending on the particular circumstances of each violation.

Local Revenues: Based on information provided by Charles County, local revenues may increase by up to \$1,750 for each fine assessed for first-time violations following the bill's effective date. Because it is not possible to predict the number of violations that will occur, a specific estimate of total revenue increase is not available at this time.

Small Business Effect: Small business licensees may be fined an additional \$1,750 for a first offense of selling or providing alcohol to an individual under age 21.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Charles County; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 15, 2017
mm/tso Third Reader - March 10, 2017

Analysis by: Nathan W. McCurdy

Direct Inquiries to:
(410) 946-5510
(301) 970-5510