

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2018 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader

House Bill 297
Economic Matters

(Dorchester County Delegation)

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Dorchester County - Alcoholic Beverages - Beer and Wine Festivals

This bill authorizes the Dorchester County Board of License Commissioners to approve more than one beer and wine festival in Dorchester County each year and makes conforming changes. The bill requires the board to approve, rather than choose, a location for a festival that is not already licensed and prohibits the board from approving more than one festival for any one weekend. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2018.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None.

Local Effect: Dorchester County revenues increase minimally for each additional beer and wine festival license issued as a result of the bill. Monitoring of the licenses can be handled using existing budgeted resources.

Small Business Effect: Potential meaningful. Small businesses may benefit from participating in any additional beer and wine festivals authorized under the bill.

Analysis

Current Law: In Dorchester County, the board of license commissioners may issue one Dorchester County Beer and Wine Festival license each year for one weekend, Friday through Sunday inclusive. The board must choose a location that is not already licensed and must ensure that the primary focus of the festival is the promotion of Maryland beer and wine. The board may set the license fee.

The board may issue the license to a holder of a retail license, Class 3 winery license, Class 4 limited winery license, Class 6 pub-brewery license, Class 7 micro-brewery license, or Class 8 farm brewery license. The license authorizes the holder to display and sell wine that is manufactured and processed in any state and distributed in Maryland when the license application is filed, as well as beer that is brewed by a brewer that brews less than 40,000 barrels of beer annually and whose product is distributed in Maryland when the license application is filed. A license holder may display and sell beer and wine at retail for on- and off-premises consumption during the hours and days designated for the festival.

Background: Beer and wine festivals are held annually throughout the State. They are generally seen as advertising and publicity events for businesses participating in the festival.

In fiscal 2017, a total of 91 retail alcoholic beverages licenses were issued for use in Dorchester County.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: SB 51 (Senator Eckardt) - Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs.

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

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - January 23, 2018
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