

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2023 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE  
First Reader

Senate Bill 795  
Finance

(Senators Carozza and Mautz)

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Wicomico County - Alcoholic Beverages - Cigar Lounge License

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This bill establishes a Class B-CL (cigar lounge) beer, wine, and liquor (BWL) license in Wicomico County and authorizes the Wicomico County Board of License Commissioners to issue the license for use in a cigar lounge and for on-premises consumption only. The application for the license must be signed by at least one owner of the cigar lounge who is a resident and taxpayer in Wicomico County. The bill specifies that the license is exempt from distance restrictions pertaining to a school building or a place of worship. A retail tobacco business holding a Class B-CL BWL license is not subject to specified indoor smoking restrictions. The annual license fee is \$900. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2023.**

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Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** None.

**Local Effect:** Wicomico County revenues increase to extent Class B-CL BWL licenses are issued under the bill. Wicomico County can handle any additional enforcement activity with existing resources.

**Small Business Effect:** Minimal overall, but potentially meaningful for any small business that obtains a cigar lounge license under the bill.

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Analysis

**Bill Summary:** The Class B-CL license may sell beer, wine, and liquor during the hours and days designated for a Class C BWL license. The hours and days are (1) on Monday through Saturday, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 a.m. the following day, and (2) on Sunday, from

12:30 p.m. to midnight, only to customers who are seated on the premises. In addition, the license holder may not sell beer, wine, or liquor at a bar or counter on Sunday.

**Current Law:** In Wicomico County, the board is authorized to issue multiple types of Class B alcoholic beverages licenses to restaurants that allow the sale of beer, wine, or liquor, as specified under the type of license issued.

*Indoor Smoking Restriction*

Beginning on February 1, 2008, a person in Maryland generally may not smoke in (1) an indoor area open to the public; (2) an indoor place in which meetings are open to the public; (3) a government-owned or government-operated means of mass transportation; or (4) an indoor place of employment. A retail business that is a sole proprietorship, limited liability company, corporation, partnership, or other enterprise in which the primary activity is the sale of tobacco or similar products is exempt from the restriction.

**Local Fiscal Effect:** The annual license fee for a Class B-CL license is \$900 and there is an initial application fee of \$75 and an annual renewal fee of \$50. Therefore, Wicomico County revenues increase by \$975 in fiscal 2024 for each Class B-CL license issued and \$950 annually thereafter for each license renewal.

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**Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** Similar legislation has not been introduced within the last three years.

**Designated Cross File:** None.

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

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 21, 2023  
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