

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2014 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**

Senate Bill 161

(Senators Conway and Reilly)

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Economic Matters

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**Alcoholic Beverages - Hard Cider - Definition**

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This bill expands the definition of “hard cider” to include a beverage derived primarily from pears, or pear concentrate and water, containing at least one-half of 1% and less than 7% of alcohol by volume.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** None. The bill codifies current practice.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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**Analysis**

**Current Law:** “Hard cider” is defined as a beverage derived primarily from apples, or apple concentrate and water, containing no other fruit product, and containing at least one-half of 1% and less than 7% of alcohol by volume.

Hard cider is taxed as beer. The sales tax on alcoholic beverages is 9%, and the alcoholic beverages tax on beer is \$0.09 per gallon. Revenues from these taxes are deposited into the general fund.

**Background:** According to the Comptroller’s Office, for several years, taxes have been submitted by manufacturers on what appears to be small quantities of pear cider as it is brought into the State. Thus, the bill merely codifies current practice.

The traditional term for a fermented pear beverage is perry.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** HB 261 (Delegate Minnick, *et al.*) - Economic Matters.

**Information Source(s):** Comptroller's Office, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 10, 2014  
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