

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2015 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 794
Economic Matters

(Washington County Delegation)
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Washington County - Liquor Tasting License

This bill authorizes the Washington County Board of License Commissioners to issue a special liquor tasting license (LTL) to a holder of a Class A (off-sale) beer, wine, and liquor license. The annual license fee is \$300 for 12 tastings and \$500 for 24 tastings. An LTL allows the licensee to provide liquor, for tasting or sampling purposes only, on the licensed premises. Servings are limited to no more than one-half ounce of any one liquor to any one customer and four samples per customer. A licensee may not charge for tasting or sampling and may not hold more than one liquor, beer, or wine tasting event on the same day. Further, a licensee may not open more than four bottles at any one time during a liquor tasting event. The contents of each bottle may not be mixed with any other bottle, and all bottles must be destroyed once empty. A licensee must notify the board in writing at least 10 days in advance of any scheduled tasting day. The board may adopt regulations.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None.

Local Effect: Washington County revenues increase by \$300 annually for every 12-tasting LTL issued and by \$500 annually for every 24-tasting LTL issued, not including any applicable fees. County expenditures are not materially affected.

Small Business Effect: Minimal overall, but potential meaningful positive impact for any holder of a Class A beer, wine, and liquor license who applies for and receives an LTL.

Analysis

Current Law: The Washington County Board of Liquor License Commissioners may issue a special wine tasting license to the holder of a Class A (off-sale) beer, wine, and

liquor license or a Class B (on-off sale) beer, wine, and liquor license to permit on-premises consumption of wine for tasting or sampling purposes only. The special wine tasting license authorizes the holder to hold 12 events every year and must notify the board in writing at least 10 days in advance of any scheduled tasting date. The fee for a special wine tasting license is \$200.

Background: In fiscal 2014, there were 37 Class A beer, wine, and liquor licenses in effect for locations in Washington County.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: SB 634 (Washington County Senators) - Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs.

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

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 19, 2015
md/lgc

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