

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2015 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

Senate Bill 888 (Senator Conway)  
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

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**Task Force to Study the Issuance of Beer and Wine Licenses to Chain Stores**

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This bill establishes the Task Force to Study the Issuance of Beer and Wine Licenses to Chain Stores. The bill provides for the membership of the task force and specifies that task force members may not receive compensation but are entitled to reimbursement for standard travel expenses. The Comptroller's Office must provide staff for the task force. The task force must study (1) the costs, benefits, and feasibility of issuing beer and wine licenses to chain stores; (2) how other states have implemented similar legislation; and (3) any other issues that the task force considers relevant. In addition, the task force must (1) make recommendations regarding the issuance of beer and wine licenses to chain stores and (2) report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly by December 31, 2016.

The bill takes effect June 1, 2015, and terminates June 30, 2017.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** Any expense reimbursements for task force members and staffing costs for the Comptroller's Office are assumed to be minimal and absorbable within existing resources.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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**Analysis**

**Current Law:** Except by way of renewal, or as otherwise provided, a Class A, Class C, or Class D alcoholic beverages license may not be granted, transferred, or issued to, or for

use in conjunction with, or upon the premises of any chain store, supermarket, or discount house. A discount house does not include a licensee who sells at discount prices.

**Background:** Chapter 99 of 1962 prohibited the issuance, transfer, or grant of Class A, B, or D beer, wine, and liquor licenses, except by way of renewal, to chain stores, supermarkets, or discount houses. Chapter 991 of 1978 prohibited the issuance, transfer, or grant of Class A, B, or D beer; beer and wine; or beer, wine, and liquor licenses, except by way of renewal, to chain stores, supermarkets, or discount houses. The prohibitions did not affect current license holders in those establishments. In Maryland, a number of grandfathered licensees that are grocery stores or convenience stores remain that retained the privilege to sell beer and wine on their premises.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

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

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - March 16, 2015  
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