

Department of Fiscal Services
Maryland General Assembly

FISCAL NOTE

House Bill 114 (Delegate Bozman, *et al.*)
Economic Matters

Worcester County - Alcoholic Beverages (Penalties)

This bill authorizes the Worcester County Board of License Commissioners to impose a fine and suspend an alcoholic beverages license for any violation of the county's alcoholic beverages laws. Currently, the board may do one or the other, not both. In addition, the bill increases the maximum fine from \$1,000 to \$4,000.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None.

Local Effect: Indeterminate increase in Worcester County revenues. No effect on expenditures.

Small Business Effect: Potential minimal effect on small businesses as discussed below.

Fiscal Analysis

Local Revenues: The Worcester County Board of License Commissioners issued 292 alcoholic beverages licenses in 1996. Annually, the board imposes less than ten fines (totaling about \$10,000) and suspends only one or two licenses. The bill increases the maximum fine amount from \$1,000 to \$4,000. If the board imposes the maximum fine, revenues could increase by up to \$30,000 annually, assuming that the bill's provisions do not deter violations.

Small Business Effect: In 1996 the Worcester County Board of License Commissioners issued 292 alcoholic beverages licenses. Although the number of licensees that are small businesses is unknown, the vast majority would fall into that category. The bill increases the maximum fine from \$1,000 to \$4,000. As a result, small business licensees that violate the

county's alcoholic beverages laws could experience an increase in costs. Small business licensees that adhere to the laws would not be impacted. The bill also allows the board to impose both a fine and suspend a license. Thus, small business licensees could be affected through a loss of revenues if their licenses are suspended by the board.

Information Source(s): Worcester County, Department of Fiscal Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 28, 1997
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