

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2004 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**

Senate Bill 667

(Senator Colburn)

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Economic Matters

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**Dorchester County - Alcoholic Beverages - Fines and Suspensions**

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This bill authorizes the Dorchester County Board of License Commissioners to impose a fine up to \$2,500 in addition to or instead of suspending a license for a violation of alcoholic beverages laws that is cause for suspension. Imposition of this fine does not limit the imposition of any other penalty for the same violation and is independent of any court action based on the same violation. All fines must be deposited into the county's general fund.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** None.

**Local Effect:** Potential minimal increase in Dorchester County revenues.

**Small Business Effect:** Minimal.

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**Analysis**

**Current Law:** The Dorchester County Board of License Commissioners is authorized to suspend or revoke an alcoholic beverages license for violations of alcoholic beverages laws.

However, most jurisdictions are authorized to assess local penalties including fines in addition to or instead of suspension or revocation of a license. Only Calvert, Dorchester, and Talbot counties are currently not authorized to assess local penalties.

Monetary penalties for violations of alcoholic beverage laws vary from county to county. However, most counties issue fines as set in statute, for any violation of alcoholic beverage laws. Most local licensing boards may impose a maximum fine of between \$1,000 and \$2,500.

**Local Fiscal Effect:** Dorchester County advises that it anticipates five cases annually where the board would impose a fine in addition to or instead of a suspension of a license. The county also advises that fines may vary depending on the nature and severity of the violation.

Assuming the board imposes five fines annually at the maximum fine of \$2,500 per violation, Dorchester County revenues would increase by \$12,500 annually.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Dorchester County, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - March 2, 2004  
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