

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2005 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 1009 (Delegate V. Clagett)
Economic Matters

Anne Arundel County - Light Wines - Percentage of Alcohol

This bill increases from 15.5% to 22% the maximum allowable percentage of alcohol that may be contained in light wine in Anne Arundel County.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2005.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None.

Local Effect: Increasing the maximum allowable percentage of alcohol for light wine in Anne Arundel County would not directly affect county finances.

Small Business Effect: Overall minimal, but potential meaningful positive impact for those businesses that would be allowed to sell stronger wines under a beer and light wine license.

Analysis

Current Law: The maximum allowable percentage of alcohol by volume for light wine in Anne Arundel County is 15.5%.

Background: In nine jurisdictions, the maximum allowable percentage of alcohol that may be contained in light wine is 15.5%; in 14 counties – Baltimore, Caroline, Carroll, Dorchester, Frederick, Garrett, Kent, Montgomery, Queen Anne’s, St. Mary’s, Somerset,

Talbot, Wicomico, and Worcester – the maximum allowable percentage is 22%, and in Harford County the maximum is 23%.

Wine making technology has evolved over the last 20 years and many wines now have alcohol by volume percentages higher than 15.5%. Additionally, new products such as “ice” wines and certain types of brandy and sherry have alcohol content by volume greater than 15.5%.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Anne Arundel County, Department of Legislative Services

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mll/ljm

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