

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2006 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

Senate Bill 615

(Senator Colburn)

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Economic Matters

Wicomico County - Alcohol Awareness Program

This bill provides that in Wicomico County an alcoholic beverages licensee, except for the holder of a Class C license, or a person who is employed in a supervisory capacity designated by the licensee, must be certified by an approved alcohol awareness program and must be present during the hours which alcoholic beverages may be sold. A person certified by an approved alcohol awareness program may be absent from the licensed premises for a bona fide personal or business reason or an emergency if the absence lasts no more than two hours. The licensee is required to keep a log of such absences.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None.

Local Effect: None. Enforcement could be handled with existing resources.

Small Business Effect: Minimal.

Analysis

Current Law: A Class C license is for on-sale alcoholic beverages at a club. In Harford, Howard, Kent, Montgomery, and Washington counties, the licensee or person employed in a supervisory capacity must be certified by an approved alcohol awareness program and must be present during the hours in which alcohol may be sold. However, in Howard, Kent, and Washington counties, a person certified by an approved alcohol awareness program may be absent from the licensed premises for a bona fide personal or business reason or an emergency if the absence lasts no more than two hours; the licensee must maintain a log of all absences. Additionally, in Baltimore City, the owner of a

bottle club or a person employed in a supervisory capacity at a bottle club must be certified by an approved alcohol awareness program and must be present during the hours in which alcohol is served or consumed.

Background: According to the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax Division of the Comptroller's Office, there were 22 alcohol awareness programs and 324 alcohol awareness instructors approved in fiscal 2005.

Health Communications, Inc., a provider of certified instructors for alcohol awareness programs, advises that instructors set their own rates for providing instruction in alcohol awareness. The company further advises that an individual can expect to pay a minimum of \$40 for the program and that a course typically lasts five hours.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: HB 462 (Delegate Cane, *et al.*) – Economic Matters.

Information Source(s): Comptroller of the Treasury; Wicomico County; Health Communications, Inc; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 3, 2006
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Analysis by: Karen S. Benton

Direct Inquiries to:
(410) 946-5510
(301) 970-5510