

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2009 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**  
**Revised**

House Bill 969

(Prince George's County Delegation)

Economic Matters

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

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**Prince George's County - Alcoholic Beverages - Bottle Clubs**  
**PG 316-09**

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This bill prohibits a “bottle club” from operating in Prince George’s County. The bill defines a “bottle club” as a premises or establishment, including any place open to the public, that (1) is subject to any license in the State or county, other than an alcoholic beverages license; and (2) serves, gives, dispenses, keeps, or allows to be consumed on the premises alcoholic beverages that the person obtained off-site, or, in the case of a patron who pays admission, alcoholic beverages purchased or otherwise brought to the premises by an owner or operator or an agent of an owner or operator.

The bill repeals a current statutory provision prohibiting the owner or operator of a for-profit business without an alcoholic beverages license from knowingly allowing patrons to bring alcoholic beverages for consumption into the establishment and replaces it with a provision that prohibits the owner or operator of a bottle club from: (1) evading the alcoholic beverage license laws in the county; and (2) selling, giving, serving, dispensing, keeping, or allowing to be consumed in the bottle club any alcoholic beverage, setups, or other component parts of mixed alcoholic drinks.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** None.

**Local Effect:** None. While the bill eliminates bottle clubs in Prince George’s County, county finances will not be affected since bottle clubs are not licensed by the county.

**Small Business Effect:** Potential minimal impact to the extent that businesses do not rely solely on allowing customers to consume alcohol purchased off premises.

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## Analysis

**Current Law:** In Prince George's County, a person who operates a for-profit business establishment that does not have an alcoholic beverage license is prohibited from knowingly allowing customers to bring alcoholic beverages for consumption into the establishment. The county also prohibits the sale of alcohol at "places of public entertainment," which are establishments featuring sexual displays or attire. An establishment holding an alcoholic beverage license is subject to the revocation or suspension of that license following a finding that such displays occur on its premises.

Nine jurisdictions (Baltimore City and Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Cecil, Charles, Dorchester, Frederick, Montgomery, and St. Mary's counties) restrict or prohibit the operation of bottle clubs. These clubs are generally defined as establishments that allow patrons to consume alcoholic beverages that were purchased off premises.

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### Additional Information

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Prince George's County, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 19, 2009  
mcp/mwc Revised - Enrolled Bill - May 20, 2009

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