

Written Submission: Somerset County Alcoholic Beverages- Abolishment of Liquor Control Board and Dispensary System (Senate Bill 495)

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## UNFAVORABLE vote for SB 495

The following are reasons for an UNFAVORABLE vote of SB495:

Crisfield-Somerset County Times reported the following facts on February 9, 2022:

- Financially the county would lose \$254,510, based on FY2020/2021 according to Gene Adkins, Somerset County Director of Finance. Adkins projects another profitable fiscal year.
- Currently both Princess Anne and Crisfield each receive \$25,278 to supplement the towns
- County Commissioner, Rex Simpkins has reported that the Liquor Board has NOT lost money. For some reason, Simpkins wants to privatize the liquor sales even though by his own report it has made money for the county
- County Commissioner, Randy Laird's statement that the county could possibly recoup about \$25,000 through the \$5,000 licensing fee for each liquor store does not seem feasible since there is no guarantee that the county would even have 5 liquor stores apply
- The county currently owns 2 liquor store properties located in Princess Anne, and Pocomoke/Southern Somerset. This will increase profits. The Pocomoke/Southern Somerset store even draws income from neighboring county and state.
- There are absolutely no guarantees how many or IF any retail stores would want to set up a store, therefore the \$25,000 may not even be reached

2020 Census reports:

- Somerset County's population: 24,620. This would question how many liquor licenses would even be issued, once again reducing the chances of even recouping \$25,000.
- Median Household Income was \$37,803
- Persons in Poverty was 22.2%
  - These numbers from the Census reports highlights that EVERY dollar counts for county revenue

Summary: Consider an UNFAVORABLE vote for SB 495 due to revenue loss for the County.

- Somerset County remains one of the poorest counties in the State.
- Every dollar of revenue is critical to Somerset County residents
- County financial liabilities continue to rise to the point of increased taxation on properties which will put families in jeopardy of losing their homes

