

NEWS FROM.....SENATOR RICHARD F. COLBURN

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
February 26, 2010

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Senator Colburn Reports from Annapolis (This Week)

ANNAPOLIS – Senator Richard F. Colburn (R. Eastern Shore) reported on events that took place this week. Senator Colburn stated, “On Thursday, February 25, at 1:00, the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee heard Senate Bill 421 (Election Law – Delay in Replacement of Voting Machines). This bill would delay the date for replacing the state’s direct-recording electronic (DRE) touchscreen voting system with a voter-verified paper record voting system until 2016. It would allow the state to continue using the touchscreen voting system for elections at least until payments for the touchscreen voting system are concluded. It would alter provisions relating to the certification of voting systems. Five reasons that I sponsored this legislation to delay the replacement are:

- The DRE system we now have works.
- The state is still paying for these machines.

- The US Election Assistance Commission continues to work on current voluntary voting system guidelines expected in federal legislation in 2012.
- With early voting, using the DRE touchscreens makes sense.
- Over 60% of the voting populations in the state of Maryland have never used a paper ballot in their polling place.

Also on Thursday, February 25, at 1:00, the Senate Finance Committee heard a bill I cosponsored Senate Bill 542 (Health – National Human Trafficking Resource Center Hotline – Posting of Information). The bill would require the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to adopt certain regulations related to the posting of a notice regarding the National Human Trafficking Resource Center hotline. The legislation would also establish the buildings and commercial establishments where the notice is required to be posted.

On Friday, February 26, at 1:00, the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee (EHEA) heard three alcohol related bills. Senate Bill 194 (as amended) (Dorchester County – Alcoholic Beverages – Pub-Brewery and micro-Brewery Licenses) would allow a holder of a Class 6 pub-brewery or a Class 7 micro-brewery license to be located in an enterprise zone in Dorchester County. Enterprise zones are targeted

economic development areas as defined by the Department of Business and Economic Development, and there are two potential businesses interested in locating in Dorchester County at this time. This could be an important economic development tool for tourism and the downtown area of Cambridge. Dorchester County has one of the highest unemployment rates in the state.

Senate Bill 195 (Wicomico County – Alcoholic Beverages-Micro-Brewery Licenses) was heard on Friday, February 26, in EHEA. The bill would add Wicomico County to the list of 16 counties that currently permit breweries to sell beer they have brewed in refillable containers that are sealed by the micro-brewery licensee at the time of refill. This provides an important economic development tool for the brewery itself and is also an environmentally friendly option that reduces waste.

Senate Bill 196 (Wicomico County – Alcoholic Beverages Act of 2010) was also heard on Friday, February 26, in EHEA. This bill would make several changes to Wicomico County's liquor laws as requested by the Wicomico County Council and the Wicomico Liquor Board. As amended, Senate Bill 196 would increase the annual licensing fee for a Class B beer, wine and liquor license. Secondly, it provides a differentiation between a beer tasting, wine tasting, and a beer/wine tasting license and sets fees for all

three. It also provides guidelines for how tastings should be conducted by setting limits to the amount of beer and wine that can be served and limiting the number of tastings. Lastly, the bill clarifies that a holder of a Class 6 pub-brewery license or a Class 7 micro-brewery license can locate in an enterprise zone in Wicomico County as opposed to just the city of Salisbury. When the original law was passed, the enterprise zone was contained entirely within the borders of the City of Salisbury. More recently, the zone has expanded to outside of the city limits and also includes areas in Fruitland. This change would provide an important economic development tool for targeted investment and redevelopment areas in Wicomico County.

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Senator Colburn Reports from Annapolis (Next Week)

ANNAPOLIS – Senator Richard F. Colburn (R. Eastern Shore) reported on events that will take place next week. Senator Colburn stated, “The Maryland General Assembly has now passed the 45<sup>th</sup> day or halfway point

of the 2010 Session. Thus far, over 1,050 Senate Bills have been introduced as well as about 1,450 House Bills.

Tuesday, March 2, at 1:00, the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee will hear Senate Bill 420 (Environment – Stormwater Management – New Development and Redevelopment Projects). The purpose of the bill is to make stormwater management regulations adopted by the Department of the Environment applicable to certain new development and redevelopment projects that do not have final approvals by a certain date. This bill would delay the implementation of stormwater management regulations that apply to new developments and redevelopment projects by 10 years. The regulations in the bill passed last year will have a negative impact on county and municipal smart growth. Many constituents, businesses, and specifically the Salisbury Chamber of Commerce believe that, “Without legislative action, the new stormwater management regulations will further damage the already ailing construction industry, add to the high unemployment rate, delay any economic recovery, unnecessarily add to the costs of construction and development, require more land to be used for development and negatively impact the generation of governmental revenues. The new regulations are unfair when applied to previously approved projects where there has been a great investment in

time and expense to have infrastructure plans approved, and in many cases built, under the current stormwater regulations. Many other groups have found these rules detrimental to the economic health of the state and are also strongly advocating in favor of curative legislative action.”

Next week the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee will consider amendments to Senate Bill 20 (Environment – Bay Restoration Fund – Authorized Uses). This bill would expand the uses of the septic accounts of the Bay Restoration Fund regulated by the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) to include providing grants or loans for the connection of an on-site sewage disposal system to an existing municipal wastewater facility. Doing this would help achieve enhanced nutrient removal (ENR) level treatment for more Maryland residents. The grants or loans may be for up to 100% of the cost that would be authorized under current law for repairing or replacing a failing septic system with one that uses best available technology for nitrogen removal by connecting that homeowner to an adjacent Wastewater Treatment Plant. Funding may only be provided if certain conditions are met.