

1631--A

2015-2016 Regular Sessions

I N   S E N A T E

January 13, 2015

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Introduced by Sens. BONACIC, O'MARA -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Racing, Gaming and Wagering -- recommitted to the Committee on Racing, Gaming and Wagering in accordance with Senate Rule 6, sec. 8 -- reported favorably from said committee and committed to the Committee on Finance -- committee discharged, bill amended, ordered reprinted as amended and recommitted to said committee

AN ACT to amend the general municipal law, in relation to poker tournaments

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, REPRESENTED IN SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

1     Section 1.     Section 185 of the general municipal law, as amended by  
2 chapter 574 of the laws of 1978, is amended to read as follows:  
3     S 185. Short title; purpose of article. This article shall be known  
4 and may be cited as the games of chance licensing law. The legislature  
5 hereby declares that the raising of funds for the promotion of bona fide  
6 charitable, educational, scientific, health, religious and patriotic  
7 causes and undertakings, where the beneficiaries are undetermined, is in  
8 the public interest. It hereby finds that, as conducted prior to the  
9 enactment of this article, games of chance were the subject of exploita-  
10 tion by professional gamblers, promoters, and commercial interests, AND  
11 IT FINDS FURTHER THAT TOURNAMENTS OF THE VARIOUS GAMES OF POKER AS  
12 OFFERED BY AUTHORIZED ORGANIZATIONS PURSUANT TO SUBDIVISION TWO OF  
13 SECTION NINE OF ARTICLE I OF THE NEW YORK STATE CONSTITUTION, SHOULD BE  
14 REGULATED UNDER THIS ARTICLE. It is hereby declared to be the policy of  
15 the legislature that all phases of the supervision, licensing and regu-  
16 lation of games of chance and of the conduct of games of chance, should  
17 be closely controlled and that the laws and regulations pertaining ther-  
18 eto should be strictly construed and rigidly enforced; that the conduct  
19 of the game and all attendant activities should be so regulated and  
20 adequate controls so instituted as to discourage commercialization of

EXPLANATION--Matter in *ITALICS* (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [ ] is old law to be omitted.

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1 gambling in all its forms, including the rental of commercial premises  
2 for games of chance, and to ensure a maximum availability of the net  
3 proceeds of games of chance exclusively for application to the worthy  
4 causes and undertakings specified herein; that the only justification  
5 for this article is to foster and support such worthy causes and under-  
6 takings, and that the mandate of section nine of article one of the  
7 state constitution, as amended, should be carried out by rigid regu-  
8 lations to prevent commercialized gambling, prevent participation by  
9 criminal and other undesirable elements and prevent the diversion of  
10 funds from the purposes herein authorized.

11 S 2. Subdivision 3 of section 186 of the general municipal law, as  
12 amended by chapter 531 of the laws of 2011, is amended to read as  
13 follows:

14 3. "Games of chance" shall mean and include only the games known as  
15 "merchandise wheels", "coin boards", "merchandise boards", "seal cards",  
16 "event games", "raffles", "POKER TOURNAMENTS" and "bell jars" and such  
17 other specific games as may be authorized by the board, in which prizes  
18 are awarded on the basis of a designated winning number or numbers,  
19 color or colors, symbol or symbols determined by chance, but not includ-  
20 ing games commonly known as "bingo or lotto" which are controlled under  
21 article fourteen-H of this chapter and also not including "bookmaking",  
22 "policy or numbers games" and "lottery" as defined in section 225.00 of  
23 the penal law. No game of chance shall involve wagering of money by one  
24 player against another player.

25 S 3. Section 186 of the general municipal law is amended by adding a  
26 new subdivision 3-f to read as follows:

27 3-F. "POKER TOURNAMENTS" SHALL MEAN AND INCLUDE CONTESTS IN WHICH  
28 PARTICIPANTS COMPETE BY PLAYING POKER GAMES THAT ARE APPROVED BY THE  
29 BOARD. PLACEMENT IN A POKER TOURNAMENT SHALL BE DETERMINED BY THE NUMBER  
30 OF POKER CHIPS THAT ARE ACCUMULATED DURING THE COURSE OF PLAY OR BY THE  
31 VARIOUS TIMES THAT CONTESTANTS ARE ELIMINATED FROM THE TOURNAMENT DURING  
32 THE COURSE OF PLAY. POKER CHIPS SHALL BE ALLOTTED TO CONTESTANTS IN  
33 ACCORDANCE WITH RULES THAT ARE ADOPTED BY THE BOARD.

34 S 4. Subdivision 14 of section 186 of the general municipal law, as  
35 amended by chapter 531 of the laws of 2011, is amended to read as  
36 follows:

37 14. "One occasion" shall mean the successive operations of any one  
38 single type of game of chance which results in the awarding of a series  
39 of prizes amounting to five hundred dollars or four hundred dollars  
40 during any one license period, in accordance with the provisions of  
41 subdivision eight of section one hundred eighty-nine of this article, as  
42 the case may be. For purposes of the game of chance known as a merchan-  
43 dise wheel or a raffle, "one occasion" shall mean the successive oper-  
44 ations of any one such merchandise wheel or raffle for which the limit  
45 on a series of prizes provided by subdivision six of section one hundred  
46 eighty-nine of this article shall apply. For purposes of the game of  
47 chance known as a bell jar, "one occasion" shall mean the successive  
48 operation of any one such bell jar, seal card, event game, coin board,  
49 or merchandise board which results in the awarding of a series of prizes  
50 amounting to three thousand dollars. For the purposes of the game of  
51 chance known as raffle "one occasion" shall mean a calendar year during  
52 which successive operations of such game are conducted. FOR THE PURPOSE  
53 OF POKER TOURNAMENTS, "ONE OCCASION" SHALL MEAN THE PERIOD OF TIME FROM  
54 THE COMMENCEMENT OF SUCH TOURNAMENT UNTIL A WINNER OR WINNERS ARE DETER-  
55 MINED OR A PRE-DETERMINED TIME TO CONCLUDE THE TOURNAMENT HAS BEEN  
56 REACHED.

1 S 5. Subdivision 5 of section 189 of the general municipal law, as  
2 amended by chapter 455 of the laws of 2012, is amended to read as  
3 follows:

4 5. No single prize awarded by games of chance other than raffle OR  
5 POKER TOURNAMENT shall exceed the sum or value of three hundred dollars,  
6 except that for merchandise wheels, no single prize shall exceed the sum  
7 or value of two hundred fifty dollars. No single prize awarded by raffle  
8 shall exceed the sum or value of one hundred thousand dollars. No single  
9 wager shall exceed six dollars and for bell jars, coin boards, or  
10 merchandise boards, no single prize shall exceed five hundred dollars  
11 provided, however, that such limitation shall not apply to the amount of  
12 money or value paid by the participant in a raffle in return for a tick-  
13 et or other receipt. For coin boards and merchandise boards, the value  
14 of a prize shall be determined by its costs to the authorized organiza-  
15 tion or, if donated, its fair market value.

16 S 6. Subdivision 8 of section 189 of the general municipal law, as  
17 amended by chapter 455 of the laws of 2012, is amended to read as  
18 follows:

19 8. Except for merchandise wheels [and], raffles AND POKER TOURNAMENTS,  
20 no series of prizes on any one occasion shall aggregate more than four  
21 hundred dollars when the licensed authorized organization conducts five  
22 single types of games of chance during any one license period. Except  
23 for merchandise wheels, raffles [and], bell jars AND POKER TOURNAMENTS,  
24 no series of prizes on any one occasion shall aggregate more than five  
25 hundred dollars when the licensed authorized organization conducts less  
26 than five single types of games of chance, exclusive of merchandise  
27 wheels, raffles [and], bell jars AND POKER TOURNAMENTS, during any one  
28 license period. No authorized organization shall award by raffle prizes  
29 with an aggregate value in excess of two million dollars during any one  
30 license period.

31 S 7. Section 195-d of the general municipal law, as amended by chapter  
32 637 of the laws of 1999, is amended to read as follows:

33 S 195-d. Charge for admission and participation; amount of prizes;  
34 award of prizes. A fee may be charged by any licensee for admission to  
35 any game or games of chance conducted under any license issued under  
36 this article. The clerk or department may in its discretion fix a mini-  
37 mum fee. NO MORE THAN ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS SHALL BE CHARGED AS AN ADMIS-  
38 SION FEE TO A POKER TOURNAMENT. FIFTY PERCENT OF SUCH FEE SHALL BE  
39 APPLIED TO A PRIZE OR PRIZES, AS MAY BE DETERMINED BY THE AUTHORIZED  
40 ORGANIZATION, AND FIFTY PERCENT OF SUCH FEE SHALL BE RETAINED BY THE  
41 AUTHORIZED ORGANIZATION, SUBJECT TO THE PROVISIONS OF SUBDIVISION SIX OF  
42 SECTION ONE HUNDRED EIGHTY-SIX OF THIS ARTICLE. With the exception of  
43 bell jars, coin boards, seal cards, merchandise boards, and raffles,  
44 every winner shall be determined and every prize shall be awarded and  
45 delivered within the same calendar day as that upon which the game was  
46 played. No alcoholic beverage shall be offered or given as a prize in  
47 any game of chance.

48 S 8. Section 195-e of the general municipal law, as amended by chapter  
49 94 of the laws of 1981, is amended to read as follows:

50 S 195-e. Advertising games. A licensee may advertise the conduct of  
51 games of chance to the general public by means of newspaper, circular,  
52 handbill and poster, and by one sign not exceeding sixty square feet in  
53 area, which may be displayed on or adjacent to the premises owned or  
54 occupied by a licensed authorized organization, and when an organization  
55 is licensed to conduct games of chance on premises of an authorized  
56 games of chance lessor, one additional such sign may be displayed on or

1 adjacent to the premises in which the games are to be conducted. Addi-  
2 tional signs may be displayed upon any fire fighting equipment belonging  
3 to any licensed authorized organization which is a volunteer fire compa-  
4 ny, or upon any equipment of a first aid or rescue squad in and through-  
5 out the community served by such volunteer fire company or such first  
6 aid or rescue squad, as the case may be. All advertisements shall be  
7 limited to the description of such event as "Games of chance" [or], "Las  
8 Vegas Night" OR "POKER TOURNAMENT", the name of the authorized organiza-  
9 tion conducting such games, the license number of the authorized organ-  
10 ization as assigned by the clerk or department and the date, location  
11 and time of the event.

12 S 9. This act shall take effect on the one hundred eightieth day after  
13 it shall have become a law; provided, however, that effective immediate-  
14 ly, the addition, amendment and/or repeal of any rule or regulation  
15 necessary for the implementation of this act on its effective date are  
16 authorized to be made and completed by the state racing and wagering  
17 board on or before such date.