

STATE OF NEW YORK

10479

IN SENATE

May 15, 2026

Introduced by Sen. SCARCELLA-SPANTON -- read twice and ordered printed,
and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Racing, Gaming
and Wagering

AN ACT to amend chapter 697 of the laws of 2025, amending the general
municipal law relating to electronic bell jar games, to amend the
general municipal law, in relation to permitting certain fraternal
organizations to conduct charitable gaming by operating electronic
bell jar vending machines; and to repeal certain provisions of such
law relating thereto

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assem-
bly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. Section 1 of chapter 697 of the laws of 2025, amending the
2 general municipal law relating to electronic bell jar games, as amended
3 by chapter 4 of the laws of 2026, is amended to read as follows:

4 Section 1. Legislative findings and purpose. 1. The legislature hereby
5 finds that:

6 (a) bell jar games are a popular and profitable fundraising mechanism
7 for bona fide not-for-profit organizations across the state, generating
8 millions of dollars in net revenues for charitable purposes every year;

9 (b) organizations that offer bell jars and other games of chance must
10 meet strict standards established by the New York state general muni-
11 cipal law and the New York state gaming commission, including receiving a
12 license to conduct charitable gaming activities; and

13 (c) while other types of gaming in New York state have continued to
14 expand and improve, the operation of charitable gaming activities has
15 largely remained the same over the last several decades.

16 2. (a) For the aforementioned reasons, the legislature hereby declares
17 that veteran organizations, fraternal organizations, and volunteer fire
18 companies licensed to conduct charitable gaming would greatly benefit
19 from the ability to operate electronic bell jar vending machines, which
20 display and dispense pre-printed bell jar tickets that have predeter-
21 mined winners and predetermined values for prizes, in order to help
22 increase charitable gaming profits across the state and attract more
23 members to join such organizations; and

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

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1 (b) Provided further, the legislature also declares that this legis-
2 lation includes appropriate safeguards to ensure that electronic bell
3 jar vending machines remain a limited and controlled fundraising tool,
4 distinct from video lottery terminals or slot machines in design and
5 function. The machines authorized herein may only be operated by
6 licensed veteran organizations, fraternal organizations and volunteer
7 fire companies, are limited pursuant to the provisions of subdivision 6
8 of section 195-c of the general municipal law in order to prohibit casin-
9 o-like gaming parlors, and are solely for use by members of such veter-
10 an organizations, fraternal organizations, and volunteer fire companies.

11 § 2. Subdivision 23 of section 186 of the general municipal law, as
12 added by chapter 4 of the laws of 2026, is amended to read as follows:

13 23. "Veteran organization" means a members-only organization compris-
14 ing veterans and their family members, where the organization's focus is
15 on the support of and advocacy for veterans and military service members
16 [~~and that is licensed to operate bell jar games as of November thirti-~~
17 ~~eth, two thousand twenty five and shall not include any auxiliary organ-~~
18 ~~izations~~].

19 § 3. Section 186 of the general municipal law is amended by adding a
20 new subdivision 25 to read as follows:

21 25. "Fraternal organization" means any society, order, state headquar-
22 ters, or association within this state, except a college or high school
23 fraternity, that is not organized for profit, that is a branch, lodge,
24 or chapter of a national or state organization, and that exists exclu-
25 sively for the common business or sodality of its members.

26 § 4. Subdivision 10 of section 189 of the general municipal law, as
27 amended by chapter 574 of the laws of 1978, is amended to read as
28 follows:

29 10. No person except a bona fide member of the licensed authorized
30 organization [~~shall participate in the management of such games; no~~
31 ~~person except a bona fide member of the licensed authorized organiza-~~
32 ~~tion,~~] or its auxiliary or affiliated organization, shall participate in
33 the operation of such game, as set forth in section one hundred ninety-
34 five-c of this article.

35 § 5. The section heading and subdivisions 1 and 6 of section 195-c of
36 the general municipal law, as amended by chapter 4 of the laws of 2026,
37 are amended to read as follows:

38 Persons operating and managing games; equipment; expenses; compen-
39 sation. 1. No person shall [~~operate~~] manage any game of chance under
40 any license issued under this article except a bona fide member of the
41 authorized organization to which the license is issued, or a bona fide
42 member of an organization or association which is an auxiliary to the
43 licensee or a bona fide member of an organization or association of
44 which such licensee is an auxiliary or a bona fide member of an organ-
45 ization or association which is affiliated with the licensee by being,
46 with it, auxiliary to another organization or association. Nothing here-
47 in shall be construed to limit the number of games of chance licensees
48 for whom such persons may operate games of chance nor to prevent non-
49 members from assisting the licensee in any activity other than managing
50 [~~or operating~~] games. No game of chance shall be conducted with any
51 equipment except such as shall be owned or leased by the authorized
52 organization so licensed or used without payment of any compensation
53 therefor by the licensee. However, in no event shall bell jar tickets be
54 transferred from one authorized organization to another, with or without
55 payment of any compensation thereof. The head or heads of the authorized
56 organization shall upon request certify, under oath, that the persons

1 [~~operating~~] managing any game of chance are bona fide members of such
2 authorized organization, auxiliary or affiliated organization. Upon
3 request by an officer or the department any such person involved in such
4 games of chance shall certify that they have no criminal record. No
5 items of expense shall be incurred or paid in connection with the
6 conducting of any game of chance pursuant to any license issued under
7 this article except those that are reasonable and are necessarily
8 expended for games of chance supplies and equipment, prizes, security
9 personnel, stated rental if any, bookkeeping or accounting services
10 according to a schedule of compensation prescribed by the commission,
11 janitorial services and utility supplies if any, and license fees, and
12 the cost of bus transportation, if authorized by such clerk or depart-
13 ment. No commission, salary, compensation, reward or recompense shall be
14 paid or given to any person for the sale or assisting with the sale of
15 raffle.

16 6. (a) The maximum number of electronic bell jar vending machines that
17 a veteran organization, fraternal organization or volunteer fire company
18 may operate shall be determined by the commission, but shall in no event
19 exceed three machines.

20 (b) (i) The use of an electronic bell jar vending machine shall not be
21 approved or permitted in any location restricted by a compact between an
22 Indian tribe and the state of New York, as determined by the commission.

23 (ii) In cities with a population of one million or more as of the
24 latest federal decennial census, the following geographic considerations
25 shall apply, notwithstanding any other provision of this paragraph or
26 paragraph (a) of this subdivision:

27 For any veteran organization, fraternal organization, or volunteer
28 fire company at a premises located within two thousand five hundred feet
29 of any gaming facility, the maximum number of electronic bell jar vend-
30 ing machines that may be operated shall be one. The commission shall
31 establish procedures for measuring such distance. For any veteran organ-
32 ization or volunteer fire company at a premises located more than two
33 thousand five hundred feet but not more than one mile from any gaming
34 facility, the maximum number of electronic bell jar vending machines
35 that may be operated shall be two, provided that the commission, in
36 authorizing such machines, considers local market conditions and the
37 objectives of preventing market oversaturation. For any veteran organ-
38 ization, fraternal organization, or volunteer fire company at a premises
39 located more than one mile from any gaming facility, the maximum number
40 of electronic bell jar vending machines shall be three, provided that
41 the commission shall retain the discretion to impose stricter limita-
42 tions based on local density of veteran organizations, fraternal organ-
43 izations, and/or volunteer fire companies operating such machines,
44 potential impact on existing gaming facilities, and the determination of
45 the commission of what will best serve public convenience, consistent
46 with the objectives set forth in paragraph (c) of this subdivision. The
47 commission shall, by rule or regulation, further define the methodology
48 for assessing local density and market conditions within such cities and
49 may establish specific zones or areas where the placement of electronic
50 bell jar vending machines is further limited or requires enhanced
51 review, to ensure the responsible integration of such charitable gaming
52 opportunities.

53 (iii) The commission shall have the authority to establish, by rule or
54 regulation, specific proximity zones around gaming facilities and to
55 modify the limitations provided in subparagraphs (i) and (ii) of this
56 paragraph based upon the determination of the commission of what will

1 best serve public convenience, potential impact on existing gaming
2 facilities, and the need to prevent loss of employment at such facili-
3 ties, provided that any such modification shall be consistent with the
4 objective of supporting charitable fundraising while maintaining the
5 existing gaming landscape and preventing market oversaturation; provided
6 however, that any such modification shall constitute only a reduction of
7 the thresholds established by this subdivision.

8 (c) (i) Notwithstanding any other provision of this article, the
9 commission shall have the discretion to determine the number of elec-
10 tronic bell jar vending machines that may be operated by any veteran
11 organization, fraternal organization, or volunteer fire company, and the
12 location of such machines; provided, however, that such number of
13 machines shall not exceed the limits established in this subdivision.
14 Such discretion shall be exercised to ensure that the introduction and
15 operation of electronic bell jar vending machines occurs exclusively to
16 the fundraising capabilities of legitimate veteran organizations,
17 fraternal organizations, or volunteer fire companies while maintaining
18 the stability of existing regulated gaming sectors and revenue to the
19 state, and avoiding any loss of employment at existing gaming facili-
20 ties.

21 (ii) The commission shall deny, revoke, or limit the number of elec-
22 tronic bell jar vending machines a veteran organization, fraternal
23 organizations, or volunteer fire company may operate if the commission
24 determines that such organization has been established, structured, or
25 is being utilized, directly or indirectly, to obtain a greater number of
26 machines than otherwise would be permitted. This consideration includes,
27 but is not limited to, the creation of subsidiary entities, shell organ-
28 izations, or any other arrangement where the facts and circumstances
29 indicate an intent to circumvent the limitations set forth in this
30 subdivision. The commission is empowered to scrutinize the governance,
31 operational control, and financial interdependence of organizations to
32 make such determinations.

33 (iii) The co-siting or joint housing of multiple veteran
34 organizations, fraternal organizations and/or volunteer fire companies
35 at a single premises or contiguous premises for the primary purpose of
36 increasing the aggregate number of electronic bell jar vending machines
37 at such location beyond what would otherwise be permitted for a single
38 veteran organization, fraternal organization, or volunteer fire company
39 operating at such premises is prohibited, unless explicitly authorized
40 by the commission upon a finding that such arrangement is consistent
41 with the public interest and the objectives of this article. The
42 commission shall promulgate rules and regulations to effectuate this
43 provision, considering factors such as shared operational control,
44 membership overlap, and the primary purpose of the co-siting arrange-
45 ment.

46 § 6. Subdivision 8 of section 195-c of the general municipal law is
47 REPEALED.

48 § 7. Subdivisions 1 and 4 of section 195-o of the general municipal
49 law, as amended by chapter 4 of the laws of 2026, are amended to read as
50 follows:

51 1. Distribution; distributors. Any distributor licensed in accordance
52 with section one hundred eighty-nine-a of this article to distribute
53 bell jar tickets or electronic bell jar vending machines shall purchase
54 such tickets and vending machines only from licensed manufacturers and
55 may manufacture coin boards and merchandise boards only as authorized in
56 subdivision one-a of this section. Licensed distributors of bell jar

1 tickets shall sell such tickets and vending machines only to not-for-
2 profit, charitable or religious organizations registered by the commis-
3 sion and shall sell, lease or otherwise distribute electronic bell jar
4 vending machines only to eligible veteran organizations, fraternal
5 organizations, or volunteer fire companies as set forth in this article.
6 Any licensed distributor who willfully violates the provisions of this
7 section shall: (a) upon such first offense, have their license suspended
8 for a period of thirty days; (b) upon such second offense, participate
9 in a hearing to be conducted by the commission, and surrender their
10 license for such period as recommended by the commission; and (c) upon
11 such third or subsequent offense, have their license suspended for a
12 period of one year and shall be guilty of a class E felony. Any unli-
13 censed distributor who violates this section shall be guilty of a class
14 E felony.

15 4. Invoices; agreements. (a) A distributor shall supply with each sale
16 of a bell jar product an itemized invoice showing the distributor's name
17 and address, the purchaser's name, address, and license number, the date
18 of the sale, the account number identifying the sale from the manufac-
19 turer to distributor and the account number identifying the sale from
20 the distributor to the licensed organization, and the description of the
21 deals, including the form number, the serial number and the ideal gross
22 from every deal of bell jar or similar game.

23 (b) Prior to the sale, lease, or distribution of an electronic bell
24 jar vending machine to a veteran organization, fraternal organization,
25 or volunteer fire company, the distributor or manufacturer shall provide
26 the contract or agreement for such sale, lease or distribution to the
27 commission for approval and any modification to such contract or agree-
28 ment thereafter. Such contract or agreement shall show, at minimum:

29 (i) the name and address of the veteran organization, fraternal organ-
30 ization, or volunteer fire company;

31 (ii) the date of sale, lease or distribution;

32 (iii) the serial number of each such machine;

33 (iv) the material terms and conditions of such contract or agreement;
34 and

35 (v) any additional information as the commission may require.

36 (c) The commission may promulgate rules and regulations relating to
37 the terms of any contract or agreement for the sale, lease, or distrib-
38 ution of an electronic bell jar vending machine to a veteran organiza-
39 tion, fraternal organization, or volunteer fire company, including, but
40 not limited to, regulations to ensure that revenue from play on such
41 machines appropriately benefits the veteran organization, fraternal
42 organization, or volunteer fire company, and does not, instead, primari-
43 ly or unduly benefit any other entity, including the distributor or
44 manufacturer. The commission, in its sole discretion, may approve or
45 deny such contract or agreement and any material modification to such
46 contract or agreement thereafter. If the commission denies approval for
47 such contract, agreement or modification, it shall provide the reasons
48 for such determination.

49 § 8. Subdivision 3 of section 195-q of the general municipal law, as
50 amended by chapter 4 of the laws of 2026, is amended to read as follows:

51 3. (a) A veteran organization, fraternal organization, or volunteer
52 fire company may operate electronic bell jar vending machines only on
53 premises that it owns or leases. All such locations must be identified
54 by the veteran organization, fraternal organization, or volunteer fire
55 company and approved by the commission prior to the placement of any
56 electronic bell jar machine at those premises.

1 (b) A veteran organization, fraternal organization, or volunteer fire
2 company may operate no more machines than the number permitted in
3 section one hundred ninety-five-c of this article.

4 (c) No veteran organization, fraternal organization, or volunteer fire
5 company shall operate an electronic bell jar vending machine unless such
6 veteran organization, fraternal organization, or volunteer fire company
7 is a games-of-chance licensee authorized by the commission to operate an
8 electronic bell jar vending machine. The commission may promulgate rules
9 and regulations as the commission deems necessary for the approval of a
10 veteran organization, fraternal organization, or volunteer fire company
11 to operate an electronic bell jar vending machine. If the commission
12 denies such request, it shall provide the reasons for such determi-
13 nation.

14 (d) The commission may authorize a veteran organization, fraternal
15 organization, or volunteer fire company to operate electronic bell jar
16 games [~~only if such veteran organization or volunteer fire company was~~
17 ~~licensed to operate bell jar games as of November thirtieth, two thou-~~
18 ~~sand twenty five~~].

19 (e) Each electronic bell jar vending machine shall generate sales
20 reports and such other information that the commission may direct by
21 regulation. The commission shall have access to the server of each elec-
22 tronic bell jar vending machine for the purpose of monitoring and audit-
23 ing at no cost to the state.

24 (f) Any unclaimed funds or tickets left in any electronic bell jar
25 vending machine shall be retained by the authorized organization and
26 reported as net proceeds.

27 § 9. This act shall take effect immediately; provided, however, if
28 chapter 697 of the laws of 2025 shall not have taken effect on or before
29 such date then this act shall take effect on the same date and in the
30 same manner as such chapter of the laws of 2025 takes effect.