STATE OF NEW YORK

9845

IN SENATE

April 8, 2026

Introduced by Sen. SKOUFIS -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Cultural Affairs, Tourism, Parks and Recreation

AN ACT to amend the arts and cultural affairs law, in relation to keeping professional sports franchises in their home communities

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

Section 1. The arts and cultural affairs law is amended by adding a new title H to read as follows:

TITLE H
PROFESSIONAL SPORTS FRANCHISES
ARTICLE 27
HOME TEAM ACT

Section 27.01. Definitions.
27.03. Prohibition on moving and terminating certain franchises.
27.05. Appraisal.
27.07. Enforcement.

§ 27.01. Definitions. As used in this article:

1. The term "community", with respect to a franchise, means the metropolitan statistical area, as determined by the federal office of management and budget, in which the franchise plays the greatest number of regular season home games within its league or, where a franchise does not plays its greatest number of regular season home games within its league within a metropolitan statistical area, the county in which the franchise plays the greatest number of regular season home games within its league.

2. The term "consortium" means a group of private investors created specifically for a particular transaction of acquiring a sports franchise.

3. The term "franchise" means a member professional sports team of a league.

4. The term "franchise owner" means a person who owns a franchise.

5. The term "home community cooperative", with respect to a franchise, means an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet

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

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their common economic, social, and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly owned and democratically controlled enterprise that is based in the community in which the franchise plays the greatest number of regular season home games within its league.

6. The term "league" includes the National Football League, the National Basketball Association, Major League Baseball, the National Hockey League, Major League Soccer, the Women's National Basketball Association, the National Women's Soccer League, and any other professional sports leagues designated as such by the secretary of state.

7. The term "local government entity", with respect to a franchise, means any unit of local government with jurisdiction over land use decisions in the location in which the franchise plays the greatest number of regular season home games within its league, including the state.

8. The term "nonprofit organization" means any organization registered as a public charity or not-for-profit corporation under state or federal law.

9. The term "private company" means a business entity the securities of which do not trade on public markets.

10. The term "proper notice", with respect to proposed relocation or elimination of a franchise, means notice that is provided not later than one year prior to the commencement of the season in which the franchise is to play home games in the proposed new location or the date of franchise elimination to all interested parties, the news media, and on all social media platforms of the franchise, and includes, but is not limited to:

(a) identification of the proposed new home location, if applicable;

(b) a summary of the reasons for the proposed relocation or franchise elimination; and

(c) the date on which the proposed relocation or franchise elimination would be effective.

11. The term "social media platform" means a website or internet medium that:

(a) permits a person to become a registered user, establish an account, or create a profile for the purpose of allowing users to create, share, and view user-generated content through such an account or profile;

(b) enables one or more users to generate content that can be viewed by other users of the website or medium; and

(c) primarily serves as a medium for users to interact with content generated by other users of the website or medium.

§ 27.03. Prohibition on moving and terminating certain franchises. 1. (a) Nothing in this article shall be construed to preempt, diminish, or interfere with the right of employees to collectively bargain over terms and conditions of employment.

(b) Nothing in this article shall be construed to preempt, diminish, or interfere with a collective bargaining agreement that is in place on the effective date of this article.

2. Franchises with a community within the state shall, as a matter of public policy:

(a) be able to be owned by a government entity or members of the general public; or

(b) be able to have ownership be transferred to a government entity or members of the general public.

3. In accordance with subdivisions four and five of this section, a franchise owner may not move the franchise from their home community, move the franchise from the state, or eliminate the franchise unless the

franchise owner offers an entity specified in subdivision four of this section a fair opportunity to purchase such franchise.

4. A fair opportunity to purchase a franchise pursuant to subdivision three of this section shall be provided, in descending priority, to the following entities which, as a term of such purchase, shall be required to keep such franchise within its community:

(a) A local government entity or a home community cooperative.

(b) A nonprofit organization that operates in the community or a public-private partnership composed of a local government entity with a home community cooperative or nonprofit organization headquartered in such unit of local government.

(c) A private person, private consortium, or company that resides in the community or operates in the community.

5. At least six months prior to the relocation or elimination of a franchise, the franchise owner shall:

(a) provide proper notice regarding the proposed new location of the franchise or proposed franchise elimination to the comptroller, as determined by the comptroller, and the community, as determined by the secretary of state;

(b) offer the franchise for purchase for a fair price as determined under section 27.05 of this article; and

(c) if an offer is made which is at or above the fair price, accept an offer made by an entity, giving priority as described under subdivision four of this section.

§ 27.05. Appraisal. 1. Upon a franchise owner providing proper notice under paragraph (a) of subdivision five of section 27.03 of this article, the comptroller shall establish a team of professionally trained appraisers to evaluate a fair price for a franchise.

2. The evaluation of a fair price undertaken pursuant to this section shall deduct from the appraisal amount the total amount of any government payment, credit, or subsidy provided for the construction of any stadium where the franchise played the majority of their home games.

§ 27.07. Enforcement. 1. The attorney general shall assess against a franchise owner in violation of this article a fine of thirty thousand dollars for each day the owner is in violation of this article.

2. A local government entity may bring a civil action for violation of this article in an appropriate district court against a franchise owner for injunctive and monetary relief.

§ 2. This act shall take effect immediately.