

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2017 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

Senate Bill 1006 (Senator Jennings)
Budget and Taxation

Senior Citizen Activities Centers - Bingo Games - Authorization

This bill allows an individual who is at least 21 years old to conduct a bingo game involving cash prizes if the bingo game (1) is conducted not more than once a week in a common area of a senior citizen activities center and is restricted to members, guests of members, and patrons of the center; (2) allows a player to compete directly against one or more other players where the game is held; (3) does not allow an individual to benefit financially in any way, directly or indirectly, other than from the winnings accrued by participating as a player in the game; and (4) has a specified limit on the total fees charged for all bingo cards and the prize value that may be won by all players during any 24-hour period. The bingo game may not involve progressive jackpot bingo, a player's use of an electronic device that connects to the Internet, the use of paid public advertising or promotions, the charging of specified fees, or the use of any money except money used for purchasing bingo cards.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2017.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. No longer assessing monetary and/or incarceration penalties for bingo violations at senior citizen activities centers does not materially affect State finances.

Local Effect: None. It is assumed that incarceration penalties for bingo violations are rarely assessed, so local finances are not affected. If senior citizen activities centers conduct bingo games, local area agencies on aging and local governments can monitor bingo games with existing resources.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: An individual who is at least 21 years old may conduct a home game involving wagering if the home game (1) is limited to mah jong or a card game; (2) is conducted not more than once a week in the individual's home or in a common area of a residential property that is restricted to residents age 55 or older; (3) allows a player to compete directly against one or more other players who share a preexisting social relationship; (4) does not allow an individual to benefit financially in any way, directly or indirectly, other than from the winnings accrued by participating as a player in the game; and (5) has a \$1,000 limit on the total amount of money, tokens representing money, or any other thing or consideration of value that may be wagered by all players during any 24-hour period. The home game may not involve a player's use of an electronic device that connects to the Internet, the use of paid public advertising or promotions, the charging of specified fees, or the use of any money except money used for wagering.

A qualified organization is not prevented from conducting a gaming event for the exclusive benefit of a qualified organization if an individual or a group of individuals does not benefit financially from the gaming event or receive any of the proceeds from the gaming event for personal use or benefit.

A person who violates betting, wagering, and gambling laws is guilty of a misdemeanor and, on conviction, is subject to imprisonment for six months to one year and/or a fine of \$200 to \$1,000.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Baltimore, Carroll, Montgomery, Queen Anne's, and St. Mary's counties; Comptroller's Office; Maryland Department of Aging; Maryland State Lottery and Gaming Control Agency; Department of Legislative Services

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