

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2025 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

Senate Bill 708

(Senator Zucker)

Budget and Taxation

Sports Wagering - Independent Evaluation of Sports Wagering Content -
Required

This bill requires, instead of authorizes as specified in current law, a sports wagering licensee or sports wagering operator that advertises in the State to contract with a licensed independent evaluator to evaluate and rate the sports wagering licensee's sports wagering content, sports wagering experts, sports wagering influencers, and content partners. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2025.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill does not materially affect State finances. The State Lottery and Gaming Control Agency (SLGCA) estimates that one independent evaluator may be licensed under the bill, so license revenues may potentially increase minimally beginning in FY 2026.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: Potential meaningful.

Analysis

Current Law: Chapter 638 of 2023 requires the State Lottery and Gaming Control Commission to license independent evaluators to evaluate and rate sports wagering content provided by sports wagering experts, sports wagering influencers, and content partners. In order to be licensed, an independent evaluator must meet specified criteria. A sports wagering licensee or sports wagering operator that advertises in the State may contract with a licensed independent evaluator. An independent evaluator and its principals and

employees may not wager on a sporting event. An independent evaluator may not be compensated by a sports wagering licensee or sports wagering operator that uses the evaluator's evaluation services solely for marketing materials but may be compensated for its evaluation and rating of sports wagering content.

Under COMAR 36.10.06.04, SLGCA may issue a license for a Tier 1 contractor that is an independent evaluator. For a Tier 1 sports wagering contractor, the application fee is \$1,500, the license fee is \$2,500, and the background investigation deposit is \$2,000.

Small Business Effect: Small businesses that are sports wagering licensees must contract with a licensed independent evaluator if they wish to continue advertising in the State.

Additional Information

Recent Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has been introduced within the last three years. See SB 1066 and HB 1291 of 2024.

Designated Cross File: HB 922 (Delegate Ebersole) - Ways and Means.

Information Source(s): Maryland State Lottery and Gaming Control Agency; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 17, 2025
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