

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2007 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

Senate Bill 926

(Senator Harris)

Judicial Proceedings

Ways and Means

Harford County - Gaming - Political Fundraising

This bill authorizes a political committee in Harford County to conduct a fundraiser at which money or merchandise is awarded in a gaming event or 50/50. The prizes may not exceed the amounts otherwise allowed for a prize in the county.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None.

Local Effect: Any effect on Harford County finances is expected to be minimal.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: A political committee is a combination of two or more individuals that assists or attempts to assist in promoting the success or defeat of a candidate, political party, or question submitted to a vote in any election.

In Harford County, a gaming event is defined as bingo, a raffle, or a paddle wheel. The game of 50/50 is a drawing from a finite number of chances in which the proceeds from the sale of chances are split evenly between the winners and the organizers conducting the games.

Organizations eligible to conduct a gaming event or 50/50 include bona fide religious groups, volunteer fire companies, and nonprofit organizations that raise money for a

charitable, athletic, or educational purpose. The organization must obtain a license from the county sheriff before conducting a gaming event, but may conduct a game of 50/50 without a license.

The maximum money prize permitted for these events is as follows:

- \$50 for bingo, or \$1,000 for a bingo jackpot;
- \$50 for members-only instant bingo;
- \$10 for a paddle wheel;
- \$50 for a game of 50/50; and
- \$1,000 for a raffle, except an organization may hold a raffle with a prize not to exceed \$10,000 once a year.

A person that violates a provision of the Harford County gaming statutes is guilty of a misdemeanor and is subject to maximum penalties of imprisonment for 30 days and/or a fine of \$1,000.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: HB 1391 (Delegates McDonough and Impallaria) –Ways and Means.

Information Source(s): Harford County, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 19, 2007
ncs/rhh

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