

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2009 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**

House Bill 146  
Ways and Means

(Harford County Delegation)

Budget and Taxation

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**Harford County - Gaming**

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This bill requires the Sheriff of Harford County to charge \$10 for a 50/50 license and requires specified organizations to have a 50/50 license in order to conduct a 50/50 game except for a game held at a meeting of the organization. The bill also increases from \$50 to \$500 the maximum money prize for a 50/50 game, a bingo game, and a members-only instant bingo game. The maximum jackpot of \$1,000 for a bingo game remains unchanged.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2009.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** None.

**Local Effect:** Harford County revenues will increase minimally from collection of \$10 50/50 licensing fees. Expenditures are not affected.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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**Analysis**

**Current Law:** In Harford County, four classes of organizations can obtain a license to conduct certain types of gaming: particular religious groups; State and nationally chartered veterans organizations; volunteer fire companies; and specified nonprofit, charitable organizations.

The Harford County Sheriff charges the following license fees: \$5 for a bingo license; \$10 for a paddle wheel license; \$10 for a raffle licenses; and \$15 for a members-only instant bingo license.

Prize money for a bingo game may not exceed \$50 or \$1,000 for a jackpot. Prize money for a members-only instant bingo game may not exceed \$50.

Qualifying organizations that hold a 50/50 game may conduct the game if the game is held at a meeting of the organization and prize money does not exceed \$50. Minors may not participate.

**Background:** Each county is responsible for regulating gaming activities conducted by civic and charitable organizations. There is no statewide reporting of gaming activities by civic and charitable organizations, except for the slot machines operated on the Eastern Shore. Gaming licensees may use the proceeds of gaming activities for the benefit of their own organizations, but do not need to share them with other organizations. However, slot machine operators must use at least one-half of the proceeds from slot machines to benefit a charity.

The Maryland State Lottery indicates that Harford County issued 363 raffle permits and 1,171 bingo permits in the last year.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** HB 740 of 2008 passed the House and was referred to the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee; however, no further action was taken on the bill. Its cross file, SB 732 of 2008 was re-referred to the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee following a favorable report from the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee.

**Cross File:** SB 237 (Harford County Senators) - Budget and Taxation.

**Information Source(s):** Comptroller's Office, Maryland State Lottery Agency, Harford County, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 3, 2009  
ncs/rhh

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