

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2016 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 704
Ways and Means

(Delegate West, *et al.*)

Off-Track Betting - Maryland State Fairgrounds - Prohibition

This emergency bill prohibits the Maryland Racing Commission (MRC) from granting a permit to a person to hold satellite simulcast betting at the Maryland State Fairgrounds in Timonium. A track where racing is conducted by the State Fair Society may not be a receiving track during the time period when the State Fair Society is not licensed to conduct live racing.

The bill is applied retroactively so that it affects any authorization granted on or after January 1, 2016.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill does not materially affect State operations or finances.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: In intertrack betting, the sending and receiving track must be a mile thoroughbred racing track, a harness racing track, Fair Hill, or the State Fair Society. The sending track must be equipped to transmit simulcast races, and the receiving track must be equipped to receive simulcast races and hold intertrack betting on those races.

MRC may authorize mile thoroughbred racing licensees, harness racing licensees, Fair Hill, or the State Fair Society to participate in intertrack betting by operating sending tracks

and receiving tracks if the operators of both the sending and receiving tracks submit a joint application to MRC, MRC holds a public hearing on the matter, and the operator of the receiving track meets specified terms and requirements.

If a track where racing is conducted by the State Fair Society is within the 35-mile radius of a mile thoroughbred track, it must first obtain approval from that mile thoroughbred track before it may be a receiving track during a period of time when the State Fair Society is not licensed to conduct live racing.

Background: The State Fair Society may be authorized for up to 10 days of live racing and simulcasting at the Maryland State Fairgrounds in Timonium in conjunction with the fair each year. On February 22, 2016, MRC voted to issue a permit to the Maryland Jockey Club to operate a satellite simulcast betting facility at the Maryland State Fairgrounds, and MRC advises that the Maryland Jockey Club has already started simulcast betting at the fairgrounds. There are currently three other simulcasting outlets in the State: Pimlico Race Course (when live racing is not conducted); Riverboat on the Potomac; and Horseshoe Casino.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation; *Baltimore Sun*; Department of Legislative Services

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kb/jrb

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