

HOUSE BILL 228

C6

(PRE-FILED)

6lr0124
CF SB 231

By: **Chair, Appropriations Committee (By Request – Departmental – Labor)**

Requested: September 17, 2025

Introduced and read first time: January 14, 2026

Assigned to: Appropriations

Committee Report: Favorable

House action: Adopted

Read second time: February 22, 2026

CHAPTER _____

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Horse Racing – Prohibited Acts – Slaughter of Racehorses for Commercial**
3 **Purposes**

4 FOR the purpose of prohibiting a person from slaughtering or causing the slaughter of a
5 racehorse in the State for certain commercial purposes; prohibiting a person from
6 purchasing, selling, transferring, offering for sale, importing into the State, or
7 transporting a racehorse if the person knows or reasonably should know that the
8 racehorse will be slaughtered for certain commercial purposes; requiring certain
9 fines collected by the State Racing Commission to be distributed to the racing Special
10 Fund; authorizing the State Racing Commission and the State Department of
11 Agriculture to revoke or suspend certain licenses under certain circumstances; and
12 generally relating to the slaughter of racehorses for commercial purposes.

13 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
14 Article – Business Regulation
15 Section 11–402
16 Annotated Code of Maryland
17 (2024 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

18 BY adding to
19 Article – Business Regulation
20 Section 11–1002
21 Annotated Code of Maryland
22 (2024 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.



1 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
2 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

3 **Article – Business Regulation**

4 11–402.

5 The Special Fund consists of:

6 (1) the State share of daily licensee fees;

7 (2) pari–mutuel taxes;

8 (3) the impact aid under § 11–812 of this title;

9 (4) money from uncashed pari–mutuel tickets that are from bets made into
10 the betting pools of licensees;

11 (5) any permit fees under §§ 11–820 and 11–832 of this title; [and]

12 (6) subject to § 11–403(a)(9) and (b) of this subtitle, money from the State
13 Lottery Fund distributed under § 9–120(b) of the State Government Article; AND

14 (7) **ANY FINES COLLECTED UNDER § 11–1002(D) OF THIS TITLE.**

15 **11–1002.**

16 (A) **IN THIS SECTION, “RACEHORSE” MEANS A HORSE:**

17 (1) **BRED OR INTENDED FOR RACING, INCLUDING A WEANLING,**
18 **YEARLING, HORSE IN TRAINING, OR RACEHORSE BREEDING STOCK WITH A RECORD**
19 **OF HAVING PRODUCED OR SIRED OFFSPRING INTENDED FOR RACING; OR**

20 (2) **THAT HAS BEEN RECORDED ON THE BACKSTRETCH OF A TRACK IN**
21 **THE STATE, HAS HAD A RECORDED WORKOUT ON A TRACK IN THE STATE, OR HAS**
22 **PARTICIPATED IN A RACE MEETING IN THE STATE WHERE PARI–MUTUEL BETTING**
23 **IS ALLOWED.**

24 (B) **A PERSON MAY NOT:**

25 (1) **SLAUGHTER OR CAUSE THE SLAUGHTER OF A RACEHORSE IN THE**
26 **STATE FOR ANY COMMERCIAL PURPOSE, INCLUDING FOR HUMAN OR ANIMAL**
27 **CONSUMPTION; OR**

1 **(2) PURCHASE, SELL, TRANSFER, OFFER FOR SALE, IMPORT INTO THE**
2 **STATE, OR TRANSPORT A RACEHORSE IF THE PERSON KNOWS OR REASONABLY**
3 **SHOULD KNOW THAT THE RACEHORSE WILL BE SLAUGHTERED FOR A COMMERCIAL**
4 **PURPOSE, INCLUDING FOR HUMAN OR ANIMAL CONSUMPTION.**

5 **(C) (1) AN INDIVIDUAL WHO VIOLATES THIS SECTION IS GUILTY OF A**
6 **MISDEMEANOR AND ON CONVICTION:**

7 **(I) FOR A FIRST OFFENSE, IS SUBJECT TO A FINE NOT**
8 **EXCEEDING \$1,000 OR IMPRISONMENT NOT EXCEEDING 1 YEAR OR BOTH; OR**

9 **(II) FOR A SECOND OR SUBSEQUENT OFFENSE, IS SUBJECT TO A**
10 **FINE NOT EXCEEDING \$2,000 OR IMPRISONMENT NOT EXCEEDING 1 YEAR OR BOTH.**

11 **(2) A CORPORATION, PARTNERSHIP, OR ANY OTHER ENTITY THAT**
12 **VIOLATES THIS SECTION:**

13 **(I) FOR A FIRST OFFENSE, IS SUBJECT TO A FINE NOT**
14 **EXCEEDING \$2,500; OR**

15 **(II) FOR A SECOND OR SUBSEQUENT OFFENSE, IS SUBJECT TO A**
16 **FINE NOT EXCEEDING \$5,000.**

17 **(D) FINES COLLECTED BY THE COMMISSION AS A RESULT OF VIOLATIONS**
18 **UNDER THIS SECTION SHALL BE DISTRIBUTED TO THE SPECIAL FUND ESTABLISHED**
19 **UNDER § 11-401 OF THIS TITLE.**

20 **(E) IF THE COMMISSION OR THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**
21 **FINDS THAT A PERSON HAS VIOLATED THIS SECTION:**

22 **(1) THE COMMISSION MAY REVOKE OR SUSPEND ANY LICENSE**
23 **ISSUED TO THE PERSON BY THE COMMISSION; AND**

24 **(2) THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE MAY REVOKE OR**
25 **SUSPEND ANY LICENSE ISSUED TO THE PERSON BY THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF**
26 **AGRICULTURE.**

27 **(F) THE COMMISSION, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE STATE DEPARTMENT**
28 **OF AGRICULTURE, SHALL ADOPT REGULATIONS TO CARRY OUT THE PROVISIONS OF**
29 **THIS SECTION.**

30 **(G) NOTHING IN THIS SECTION SHALL BE CONSTRUED TO PROHIBIT**
31 **HUMANE EUTHANASIA OF A RACEHORSE BY A LICENSED VETERINARIAN FOR**

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1 REASONS UNRELATED TO COMMERCIAL PURPOSES, INCLUDING SEVERE INJURY,
2 MAIMING, OR INJURY THAT RESULTS IN NO QUALITY OF LIFE FOR THE RACEHORSE,
3 AS DETERMINED BY A LICENSED VETERINARIAN.

4 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July
5 1, 2026.

Approved:

Governor.

Speaker of the House of Delegates.

President of the Senate.