

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2026 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

Senate Bill 538
(Senator McCray)
Budget and Taxation

Baltimore City - Raffles - Organizations Affiliated With Professional Baseball and Football Teams

This bill authorizes an organization located in Baltimore City that is affiliated with a professional National Football League (NFL) team that plays its home games in Baltimore City to conduct raffles. Additionally, the bill repeals the June 30, 2026 termination date of Chapter 372 of 2025, which authorized an organization located in Baltimore City that is affiliated with a professional Major League Baseball (MLB) team that plays its home games in Baltimore City to conduct raffles. Requirements for a raffle conducted by an organization affiliated with a professional MLB team are generally applied to an organization affiliated with a professional NFL team. The bill specifies the times and the specific location for when and where raffles may be conducted by an organization affiliated with a professional NFL team. A permit to hold raffles expires one year after the permit is issued instead of at the end of the calendar year in which the permit is issued. **The bill takes effect June 1, 2026.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. While the bill may potentially decrease lottery revenues due to substitution effects beginning in FY 2026, the impact is small enough that State finances are not affected.

Local Effect: The bill does not materially affect Baltimore City finances. The Baltimore City Police Department can issue permits beginning in FY 2026 using existing resources.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Chapter 372 of 2025, which terminates June 30, 2026, authorizes an organization located in Baltimore City that is affiliated with a professional MLB team that plays its home games in Baltimore City to conduct raffles. The organization must spend a majority of its funds in Baltimore City for fraternal, civic, or charitable purposes, or for purposes related to a veterans' hospital or amateur athletics. Before conducting a raffle, an organization must obtain a written permit from a designated Baltimore City government agency. A raffle ticket may be sold and received in-person or on an electronic device within a specified area of Baltimore City, and raffle tickets must be sold and received no earlier than one hour before the official start of the baseball game and no later than the seventh inning of that baseball game.

Before issuing the permit, the designated Baltimore City government agency must ascertain the character of the applicant to determine if the permit should be issued. The agency may issue a single permit to an organization to hold raffles at multiple professional MLB games played in Baltimore City, and there is no limit on the number of raffles that an organization may conduct in conjunction with professional MLB games played in Baltimore City. A permit expires at the end of the calendar year in which the permit is issued.

The organization conducting a raffle may set the price of raffle tickets and award prizes in any amount in money or in merchandise. The organization conducting a raffle may not allow an individual or group of individuals to benefit financially from the raffle or receive any of the raffle's proceeds for personal use or benefit.

An organization conducting a raffle must use a geofence to ensure that raffle tickets sold and received on an electronic device are sold and received within a specified area in Baltimore City. A raffle ticket may only be sold using age-verification measures to ensure that the buyer is at least 18 years old.

An organization conducting a raffle is not subject to the prohibition of accepting credit under current law as long as an individual does not purchase more than \$50 worth of tickets or make more than one credit transaction each day.

A person may not knowingly conduct or attempt to conduct a raffle in violation of the Act, and a person who does so is guilty of a misdemeanor and on conviction is subject to a maximum of one year in prison and/or a maximum fine of \$1,000.

Additional Information

Recent Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has not been introduced within the last three years.

Designated Cross File: HB 717 (Delegate Edelson) - Ways and Means.

Information Source(s): Baltimore City; Comptroller's Office; Department of State Police; Maryland State Lottery and Gaming Control Agency; Department of Legislative Services

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sj/jrb

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