

PLEASE NOTE: Legislative Information **cannot** perform research, provide legal advice, or interpret Maine law. For legal assistance, please contact a qualified attorney.

An Act To Change Current Limits on Commercial Harness Racing Tracks

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 8 MRSA §1011, sub-§2, as enacted by PL 2003, c. 687, Pt. A, §5 and affected by Pt. B, §11, is amended to read:

2. Eligible persons. The board may accept applications for a license to operate slot machines from any person who is licensed to operate a commercial track that satisfies the following criteria:

A. The commercial track is ~~located at or within a 5-mile radius of the center of a commercial track that conducted harness racing with pari-mutuel wagering on more than 25 days during calendar year 2002; and~~

B. The operation of slot machines at the commercial track is approved by the voters of the municipality in which the commercial track to be licensed is located by referendum election held at any time after December 31, 2002 ~~and before December 31, 2003.~~

Sec. 2. 8 MRSA §1020, sub-§3, ¶A, as enacted by PL 2003, c. 687, Pt. A, §5 and affected by Pt. B, §11, is amended to read:

A. The total number of slot machines registered in the State may not exceed ~~1,500~~3,000; and

Sec. 3. 8 MRSA §1036, sub-§2, ¶E, as amended by PL 2005, c. 663, §12, is further amended to read:

E. Ten percent of the net slot machine income must be forwarded by the board to the State Controller to be credited to the Fund for a Healthy Maine established by Title 22, section 1511 and segregated into a separate account under Title 22, section 1511, subsection 11, with the use of funds in the account restricted to the purposes described in Title 22, section 1511, subsection 6, paragraph E, except that, if the net slot machine income is generated by slot machines located at the premises of a commercial track that was initially approved for operation of slot machines after January 1, 2009, this amount must be forwarded by the board to the Treasurer of State for deposit in the General Fund;

Sec. 4. 8 MRSA §1036, sub-§2, ¶F, as amended by PL 2005, c. 663, §12, is further amended to read:

F. Two percent of the net slot machine income must be forwarded by the board to the University of Maine System Scholarship Fund created in Title 20-A, section 10909, except that, if the net slot machine income is generated by slot machines located at the premises of a commercial track that was initially approved for operation of slot machines after January 1, 2009, this amount must be forwarded by the board to the Treasurer of State for deposit in the General Fund;

Sec. 5. 8 MRSA §1036, sub-§2, ¶G, as amended by PL 2005, c. 663, §12, is further amended to read:

G. One percent of the net slot machine income must be forwarded by the board to the board of trustees of the Maine Community College System to be applied by the board of trustees to fund its scholarships program under Title 20-A, section 12716, subsection 1, except that, if the net slot machine income is generated by slot machines located at the premises of a commercial track that was initially approved for operation of slot machines after January 1, 2009, this amount must be forwarded by the board to the Treasurer of State for deposit in the General Fund;

Sec. 6. 8 MRSA §1036, sub-§2, ¶H, as amended by PL 2005, c. 663, §12, is further amended to read:

H. Four percent of the net slot machine income must be forwarded by the board to the Treasurer of State, who shall credit the money to the Fund to Encourage Racing at Maine's Commercial Tracks, established in section 299; however, the payment required by this paragraph is terminated when all commercial tracks have obtained a license to operate slot machines in accordance with this chapter. If the net slot machine income is generated by slot machines located at the premises of a commercial track that was initially approved for operation of slot machines after January 1, 2009, this amount must be forwarded by the board to the Treasurer of State for deposit in the General Fund;

SUMMARY

This bill amends the laws governing commercial tracks and licensing for slot machines.

1. Current law requires that an applicant for a license to operate slot machines by a person licensed to operate a commercial track be located "at or within a 5-mile radius of the center of a commercial track" that conducted harness racing with pari-mutuel wagering on more than 25 days during calendar year 2002. This bill removes the 5-mile radius requirement but retains the specification that the commercial track operated by the applicant has conducted harness racing with pari-mutuel wagering during that period of time.

2. This bill removes language limiting the operation of slot machines to commercial tracks licensed by a referendum election held prior to December 31, 2003.

3. The bill provides that, for slot machines located at commercial tracks initially licensed for slot machines after January 1, 2009, the revenue designated for distribution to the Fund for a Healthy Maine, the University of Maine Scholarship Fund, the Maine Community College System and the Fund to Encourage Racing at Maine's Commercial Tracks would instead be deposited in the General Fund.

4. The bill increases from 1,500 to 3,000 the total number of slot machines allowed in the State.