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An Act To Provide Revenue to Veterans' Organizations and the Maine Veterans' Memorial Cemetery System Care Fund from Table Game Revenue

Emergency preamble. Whereas, acts and resolves of the Legislature do not become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

Whereas, veterans of this State are experiencing difficult times and services to which they are entitled should be provided without delay; and

Whereas, enactment of legislation establishing the Coordinated Veterans Assistance Grant Fund, which will aid veterans in need, must take place before July 1, 2013; and

Whereas, in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within the meaning of the Constitution of Maine and require the following legislation as immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety; now, therefore,

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

Sec. 1. 8 MRSA §1036, sub-§2-C, ¶D, as enacted by PL 2011, c. 417, §10, is amended to read:

D. Two percent of net table game income must be deposited into ~~an account held by the board for distribution to charitable nonprofit organizations that were eligible to conduct beano games and games of chance in accordance with Title 17, chapters 13-A and 62.~~ The account is nonlapsing and no distributions may be made from the account before July 1, 2013the Coordinated Veterans Assistance Grant Fund established in Title 37-B, section 514.

Sec. 2. 37-B MRSA §512, sub-§1, as enacted by PL 2009, c. 471, §1, is amended to read:

1. Maine Veterans' Memorial Cemetery System Care Fund establishment; purpose. The Maine Veterans' Memorial Cemetery System Care Fund, known in this section as "the fund," is established for the purpose of ensuring ongoing care and maintenance of veterans' graves within the Maine Veterans' Memorial Cemetery System after plot interment allowances for burials within the system are no longer received from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs. The fund is established from deposits of 1/3 of the funds received from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs for plot interment allowances and from annual deposits from the Coordinated Veterans Assistance Grant Fund established by section 514. The fund may also accept private and public donations. The fund is separate from other perpetual care or cemetery maintenance funds that support veterans' cemeteries and were established prior to the effective date of this section.

Sec. 3. 37-B MRSA §514 is enacted to read:

§ 514. Coordinated Veterans Assistance Grant Fund; establishment; purpose

The Coordinated Veterans Assistance Grant Fund, referred to in this section as "the fund," is established to provide grants to veterans' service organizations. The grants must be used to provide a veterans' service officer at a veterans' hospital, to assist organizations that provide transportation to veterans receiving medical services at a veterans' hospital and to provide funding to organizations that assist veterans who are homeless. The fund must also be used to make an annual deposit to the Maine Veterans' Memorial Cemetery System Care Fund described in section 512. The deposit made to the Maine Veterans' Memorial Cemetery System Care Fund from the fund may not exceed 25% of the annual revenue received by the fund from table game wagers at a commercial track in accordance with Title 8, section 1036, subsection 2-C, paragraph D. The bureau shall adopt rules to implement the issuance of grants to veterans' service organizations for the purposes described in this section. Rules adopted pursuant to this section are routine technical rules as defined in Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

Sec. 4. Gambling Control Board to transfer funds. Within 30 days after the effective date of this Act, all funds that are held by the Gambling Control Board within the Department of Public Safety for distribution to charitable nonprofit organizations pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 8, section 1036, subsection 2-C, paragraph D must be transferred to the Coordinated Veterans Assistance Grant Fund established in Title 37-B, section 514.

Emergency clause. In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this legislation takes effect when approved.

SUMMARY

Current law requires 2% of the net table game income generated at a casino with a commercial track to be held by the Department of Public Safety, Gambling Control Board for distribution to charitable nonprofits eligible to conduct beano or games of chance. This bill changes that distribution, instead directing the income to the Coordinated Veterans Assistance Grant Fund, which is established in the bill to give grants to assist veterans' service organizations and to make an annual deposit to the Maine Veterans' Memorial Cemetery System Care Fund.