

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1217

As Passed House:

February 23, 2009

Title: An act relating to providing the gambling commission with authority to determine locations where amusement games may be conducted.

Brief Description: Providing the gambling commission with authority to determine locations where amusement games may be conducted.

Sponsors: Representatives Simpson, Alexander, Conway and Wood; by request of Gambling Commission.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Commerce & Labor: 1/20/09 [DP].

Floor Activity

Passed House: 2/23/09, 96-1.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Provides the Washington State Gambling Commission authority to issue amusement game licenses for locations that are in addition to those expressly authorized by the Gambling Act.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE & LABOR

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 7 members: Representatives Conway, Chair; Wood, Vice Chair; Condotta, Ranking Minority Member; Crouse, Green, Moeller and Williams.

Staff: Kate Moeur (786-5793)

Background:

Under the Gambling Act (Act), the Washington State Gambling Commission (Commission) regulates wagering on activities such as social card games, bingo, raffles, amusement games, punch boards, pull-tabs, and fund-raising events.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Several sections of the Act address amusement games. An amusement game is a game played for entertainment that involves active participation by the contestant and that awards merchandise prizes only, such as crane games. Certain other criteria must be met.

The Act authorizes the Commission to issue licenses allowing persons, associations, or organizations to conduct or operate amusement games in such a manner and at such locations as the Commission may determine. The Act lists particular locations where amusement games may be conducted including certain fairs, civic centers, or amusement parks.

Commission rules allow licensed amusement game operators to conduct amusement games at commercially-operated family sports complexes, skating facilities, and grocery and department stores.

Summary of Bill:

The Commission is expressly authorized to license any person, association, or organization to operate amusement games at locations that are in addition to those listed in the Act.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This bill makes it clear that, like the Legislature, the Commission can also authorize amusement games in different locations. Current law is ambiguous as to whether only the Legislature may add locations, or whether the Commission may do so as well. Under the assumption that it had the authority, the Commission added locations authorized to conduct amusement games to its rules. However, some ambiguity was noticed in the law upon a petition for a rule change to add other locations for amusement games.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Amy Hunter, Washington State Gambling Commission.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.