

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5155

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Labor, Commerce & Financial Institutions, February 22, 2001

Title: An act relating to the live horse racing compact.

Brief Description: Establishing the live horse racing compact.

Sponsors: Senators West, Prentice, Gardner, Winsley, Rasmussen, and Kohl-Welles; by request of Horse Racing Commission.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Labor, Commerce & Financial Institutions: 1/15/01, 2/22/01 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR, COMMERCE & FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5155 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Prentice, Chair; Gardner, Vice Chair; Benton, Franklin, Honeyford, Patterson, Rasmussen, Regala, West and Winsley.

Staff: Catherine Mele (786-7470)

Background: The Washington State Horse Racing Commission licenses, regulates, and supervises parimutuel horse racing in Washington State. The Horse Racing Commission has five commissioners and four ex-officio members.

The Horse Racing Commission approved 5,648 licenses in 2000. The commission requires licensure for all individuals who participate in racing at a Washington race track. Examples of individuals licensed by the commission include jockeys, horse owners, trainers, veterinarians, horse groomers, and exercise riders. The Horse Racing Commission also licenses racing associations.

Many participants in the horse racing industry travel from state to state to participate in various races. There are concerns that the requirement of licensure in every state is time consuming. As a result, there is currently an effort to create a nationwide licensing entity for participants in the horse racing industry.

Summary of Substitute Bill: Washington is authorized to participate in a national racing license program through a live horse racing compact.

One representative appointed by the Governor from each compacting state serves on a compact committee which issues one national license to participate in horse racing in each member state. The committee has the authority to (1) determine which categories of participants in live horse racing should be licensed; (2) establish the requirements and the term for initial licensure of applicants; (3) receive criminal history information necessary to

determine whether a license should be issued; (4) issue and renew licenses; (5) organize and manage the business of the compact committee; (6) charge a fee for applications; and (7) receive funds through gifts, grants, or appropriations.

The compact committee must establish licensing requirements comparable to the most restrictive requirements of any member state. The Horse Racing Commission may charge a fee for the use of a compact license in Washington. The commission retains the right to suspend or revoke a compact committee license. The Horse Racing Commission agrees to accept the decisions of the compact committee regarding license issuance and renewal.

The compact committee does not have the power to deny a horse racing license. The compact committee must notify an applicant that it is unable to process a license, and the applicant has the right to bring additional evidence to the compact committee. If the compact committee does not process the individual's license, the individual may seek to be licensed by each state.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The substitute strikes redundant references.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: The agency's request legislation enacts a licensing compact. It will help the states reduce regulatory burdens. Racing participants have to go through a repetitive licensing process, and this has had a negative impact on the industry. A national racing license will be issued and folks can use it in Washington as well as other participating states.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Bruce Batson, Washington Horse Racing Commission (pro).