

Senate Ways and Means Committee

Sonja Caldwell 271-2117

SB 160-FN, relative to the administration of raffles.

Hearing Date: January 29, 2025

Members of the Committee Present: Senators Lang, Murphy, Sullivan, Rosenwald and Fenton

Members of the Committee Absent : None

Bill Analysis: This bill changes requirements for the sale of raffle tickets held in conjunction with bingo games and raises the maximum value tickets may be sold for.

Sponsors:

Sen. Lang

Sen. Watters

Sen. Fenton

Sen. Pearl

Rep. Ames

Rep. Moffett

Who supports the bill: Sen. Lang, Chris Melche (MGCC), Dick Bouley (Diamond Distributors), Scott Burns, Sen. Pearl, Curtis Register

Who opposes the bill: No one

Who is neutral on the bill: No one

Summary of testimony presented:

Sen. Lang explained that this is a modernization bill dealing with raffle tickets and the price of raffle tickets and is a request of the industry.

One big change is the strikeout on line 7. It has to do with the fact that in other forms of gaming we've stricken the requirement that charity members be present yet, for bingo we left that in. He wanted to align this with other forms of gaming so this will allow commercial employees of commercial bingo halls to sell raffle tickets. The bill also raises the dollar amount of prizes awarded at any raffle.

Sen. Rosenwald asked about the change on line 4 striking the word "sequentially."

Sen. Lang said that has to do with the way they distribute tickets. There was some concern that if you are distributing raffle tickets and take a few handfuls off and give them to different people to sell, you could end up selling the tickets out of sequential order. This clarifies that they don't have to be sold sequentially.

Dick Bouley

- Raffle tickets have not been changed since 1985.

- He stated he has discussed this with the Lottery Commission and Valerie King pointed out that the Lottery Commission does not control raffle tickets.
- Raffle tickets are permitted to be sold at bingo games and that is different than getting a license for a raffle.
- The one-dollar cost per ticket was established in 1985. He would like to see it changed to up to ten dollars. He noted that it does not mean the cost must be ten dollars, rather it just gives an option to go that high. It gives them a choice.
- With regard to the increase in the prize value going up to \$1,200, they don't have to. It is an option. If it's a small bingo hall, they don't have to go that high.
- Raffles are popular. They are something bingo halls like to do as an added feature.

Sen. Rosenwald asked about selling raffle tickets out of sequence. She said that the way the bill is drafted, it says the tickets have to be numbered sequentially but doesn't talk about how they are sold. She asked why that is important.

Mr. Bouley said they didn't understand why that word was there. They just want the tickets to be numbered.

Chris Melche

Mr. Melche explained that when they have a line of individuals waiting to purchase raffle tickets, they tend to rip them. Meaning that they might not get them in sequential order, but he noted they are all off the same roll. The bill itself has to do with 50-50 more than anything else. If they can sell the raffle tickets at a higher price, they can bring in more money and more people will play.