

HB 668-FN-LOCAL - AS INTRODUCED

2025 SESSION

25-0382

02/06

HOUSE BILL            ***668-FN-LOCAL***

AN ACT                authorizing municipalities to hold a referendum to rescind the licenses of historic horse racing facilities.

SPONSORS:            Rep. Ohm, Hills. 10; Rep. Almy, Graf. 17; Rep. Manohar, Hills. 9; Sen. Rosenwald, Dist 13

COMMITTEE:          Municipal and County Government

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ANALYSIS

This bill authorizes municipalities to hold a referendum on whether to prohibit the sale of pari-mutuel wagers on historic horse racing.

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Explanation:          Matter added to current law appears in ***bold italics***.  
Matter removed from current law appears ~~[in brackets and struckthrough.]~~  
Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

*In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty Five*

AN ACT authorizing municipalities to hold a referendum to rescind the licenses of historic horse racing facilities.

*Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:*

1 1 New Section; Historic Horse Racing; Local Option. Amend RSA 284 by inserting after section  
2 22-b the following new section:

3 284:22-c Local Option.

4 I. Any town or city may prohibit the sale of pari-mutuel pool wagers on historic horse racing  
5 according to the provisions of this subdivision, in the following manner:

6 (a) In a town, the question shall be placed on the warrant of an annual town meeting  
7 under the procedures set out in RSA 39:3, and shall be voted on a ballot. In a city, the legislative  
8 body may vote to place the question on the official ballot for any regular municipal election, or, in the  
9 alternative, shall place the question on the official ballot for any regular municipal election upon  
10 submission to the legislative body of a petition signed by 5 percent of the registered voters.

11 (b) The selectmen, aldermen, or city council shall hold a public hearing on the question  
12 at least 15 days, but not more than 30 days before the question is to be voted on. Notice of the  
13 hearing shall be posted in at least 2 public places in the municipality and published in a newspaper  
14 of general circulation at least 7 days before the hearing.

15 (c) The wording of the question shall be substantially as follows: "Shall we prohibit the  
16 sale of pari-mutuel pool wagers on historic horse racing within the town or city?"

17 II. If a majority of those voting on the question vote "Yes," the lottery commission shall not  
18 issue licenses pursuant to RSA 284:12-a to entities offering pari-mutuel pool wagers on historic  
19 horse racing within the town or city.

20 III. If the question is not approved, the question may later be voted upon according to the  
21 provisions of paragraph I at the next annual town meeting or regular municipal election.

22 IV. A municipality that has voted to prohibit the sale of pari-mutuel pool wagers on historic  
23 horse racing may consider rescinding its action in the manner described in paragraph I of this  
24 section.

25 IV-a. An unincorporated place may prohibit the sale of pari-mutuel pool wagers on historic  
26 horse racing by majority vote of the county delegation, after a public hearing is held.

27 V. The lottery commission shall maintain a list of municipalities where the sale of pari-  
28 mutuel pool wagers on historic horse racing is prohibited.

29 VI. Notwithstanding the provisions of this section, entities licensed to sell pari-mutuel pool  
30 wagers on historic horse racing located within municipalities which vote to prohibit the sale of pari-

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1 mutuel pool wagers on historic horse racing shall be permitted to operate until the expiration of  
2 their current license, provided that such license shall not be renewed by the lottery commission.

3 2 New Paragraph; Pari-Mutuel Pools on Historic Horse Races. Amend RSA 284:22-b by  
4 inserting after paragraph VIII the following new paragraph:

5 IX. No license to sell pari-mutuel pools on historic horse races shall be issued for  
6 establishments located within municipalities which have voted to prohibit such operation pursuant  
7 to RSA 284:22-c, provided that licensees located within such municipalities shall be permitted to  
8 operate until the expiration of their current license.

9 3 Effective Date. This act shall take effect January 1, 2026.

**HB 668-FN-LOCAL- FISCAL NOTE  
AS INTRODUCED**

AN ACT authorizing municipalities to hold a referendum to rescind the licenses of historic horse racing facilities.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

Estimated State Impact				
	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028
<b>Revenue</b>	\$0	Indeterminable - See Methodology		
<i>Revenue Fund(s)</i>	Lottery Fund/Education Trust Fund - Lottery revenue is credited to the lottery fund, with net revenues after expenditures being credited to the state education trust fund.			
<b>Expenditures*</b>	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<i>Funding Source(s)</i>	None			
<b>Appropriations*</b>	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<i>Funding Source(s)</i>	None			

\*Expenditure = Cost of bill

\*Appropriation = Authorized funding to cover cost of bill

**METHODOLOGY:**

This bill, effective January 1, 2026, allows a municipality vote to prohibit wagers on historic horse racing (HHR) within its borders. This bill also allows existing game rooms that held an HHR license prior to a municipality’s vote to prohibit HHR to continue operating until their current license expires, however, such licenses could not be renewed.

The Lottery Commission has provided the following information relative to this bill:

- The HHR license period runs from January 1 thru December 31, and is good for three (3) years, and currently licensed game rooms will need to renew their licenses for calendar year 2027.
- In FY 2024, the state received \$23.3 million in revenue from HHR.
- HHR revenue for FY 2025 is expected to far exceed \$23 million, as more game rooms begin to offer and/or expand their current HHR offerings.

While it is not possible to determine if, or when, a given municipality may vote to prohibit HHR, The Lottery Commission states that allowing a municipality to prohibit HHR at any time with no protections for existing HHR facilities creates a significant level of uncertainty for the industry which will likely deter game operators from investing in the developing new gaming

facilities in New Hampshire. Currently licenses expire on December 31, 2026, therefore, if a municipality where a current HHR licensee is operating were to prohibit this game, the licensee would be forced to cease HHR operations as of January 1, 2027. For informational purposes, FY 2024 HHR state revenue, by municipality, was as follows:

<b>Location</b>	<b>Total HHR Revenue</b>	<b>Estimated State Revenue (16.25% of Total)</b>
Belmont	\$623,000	\$101,238
Keene	\$6,214,000	\$1,009,775
Dover	\$18,602,000	\$3,022,825
Nashua	\$34,815,000	\$5,657,438
Manchester	\$25,937,000	\$4,214,763
Hampton	\$4,250,000	\$690,625
Lebanon	\$3,790,000	\$615,875
Seabrook	\$49,151,000	\$7,987,038
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$143,382,000</b>	<b>\$23,299,575</b>

**AGENCIES CONTACTED:**

Lottery Commission