

# HOUSE BILL ANALYSIS

## SSB 5560

**Brief Description:** Changing social card game provisions.

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**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Commerce & Labor (originally sponsored by Senators Schow, Prentice, Snyder, Anderson, and Horn)

Hearing: March 26, 1997

### **BACKGROUND:**

Taverns, restaurants and other businesses primarily engaged in the sale of food and beverages may be licensed to conduct social card games approved by the Gambling Commission. The Commission regulates the amount wagered, hours of operation, number of tables and the number of players per table and the types of games that can be played.

For a social card game to qualify as legal gambling activity, the game must include certain characteristics. There must be two or more participants who are players. A player is an individual who engages on equal terms with other participants solely as contestants or bettors and where no one receives a profit from the game other than their personal winnings. The success at winning must be largely determined by the player's skill.

Social card room operators may serve as custodians of player supported progressive prize contests operated in conjunction with any card game authorized by the Commission. Current law does not allow a cardroom operator to participate in a card game as a banker.

### **SUMMARY OF BILL:**

The definition of social card games is modified. A card room operator may be authorized by the Commission to participate in card games and have an interest in the proceeds of the game. The card room operator may conduct house-banked games or player-funded banked card games if authorized by the Commission.

The definition of player under the gambling laws is clarified to allow a player to pay a fee to participate in a card game if the fee is authorized by the gambling laws.

**RULES AUTHORITY:** The bill does contain provisions addressing the rule-making powers of an agency.

**FISCAL NOTE:** Requested on March 25, 1997.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.