

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2219

As Reported by House Committee On:
State Government & Tribal Affairs

Title: An act relating to the powers and duties of the gambling commission.

Brief Description: Addressing the powers and duties of the gambling commission.

Sponsors: Representatives Alexander, Ormsby, Hunt, Haler, Miloscia, McCoy, Seaquist and Appleton; by request of Gambling Commission.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

State Government & Tribal Affairs: 1/16/12 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Permits the Washington State Gambling Commission to issue certain licenses for a period of up to 18 months, if it chooses to do so, in order to transition to the use of the Business Licensing Service.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT & TRIBAL AFFAIRS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Hunt, Chair; Appleton, Vice Chair; Taylor, Ranking Minority Member; Overstreet, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Alexander, Condotta, Darneille, Dunshee, Hurst, McCoy and Miloscia.

Staff: Cece Clynch (786-7195).

Background:

The Washington State Gambling Commission (Commission) is responsible for licensing and regulating all authorized social gambling activities in the state, except for horse racing and the state lottery. The Commission investigates and controls unauthorized and illegal gambling activities. It also co-regulates tribal gaming activities pursuant to compacts between the tribes and the state.

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.

The Commission has authority to issue licenses to the following, but the period of these licenses cannot exceed one year:

- to bona fide charitable or nonprofit organizations to conduct bingo games, raffles, amusement games, and social card games, and to utilize punchboards and pull-tabs;
- to persons, associations, or organizations operating businesses primarily engaged in the selling of items of food or drink for consumption on the premises to utilize punchboards and pull-tabs and to conduct social card games as a commercial stimulant;
- to persons, associations, or organizations to conduct or operate amusement games; and
- to persons, associations, or organizations to engage in the selling, distributing, supplying, or in the manufacturing of devices for use.

The Department of Revenue operates the state's Business Licensing Service (BLS). Until transferred in 2011, this was known as the Master License Service and was operated by the Department of Licensing. The BLS allows one-stop shopping for licenses issued by state and local governments, registering businesses, renewing licenses, and providing related services for approximately 40,000 businesses monthly. It allows businesses to align the expiration dates of all of their licenses.

The Commission is currently exploring the possibility of using the BLS.

Summary of Bill:

The Commission is authorized to issue licenses that are valid for a period of up to 18 months, if it chooses to do so, in order to transition to the use of the BLS.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 12, 2012.

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) It is advantageous to include as many licenses as possible in the BLS. This bill allows the Commission to increase the license length of time in order to better coordinate renewal dates of various licenses. This bill has received very good support. With this relatively small change to the length of time for which a license may be issued, this bill could help over 3,500 licensees. The fiscal note is due tomorrow and should show a zero fiscal impact.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Alexander, prime sponsor; and Amy Hunter, Washington State Gambling Commission.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.