
Commerce & Gaming Committee

HB 1022

Brief Description: Modifying Washington state horse racing commission provisions.

Sponsors: Representatives MacEwen, Kloba, Peterson, Kirby and Schmick; by request of Horse Racing Commission.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Removes the provision prohibiting the state from paying any salary, wages, expenses, or compensation in connection with the work of the Washington Horse Racing Commission.

Hearing Date: 1/14/21

Staff: Kyle Raymond (786-7190).

Background:

The Washington Horse Racing Commission (Commission) is responsible for licensing, regulating, and supervising all race meets held in Washington where the parimutuel system of betting is used. The Commission is also responsible for inspecting each race course in the state at least once a year.

Betting or wagering on a horse race is lawful in Washington only if it is by the parimutuel method. The parimutuel method is a wagering system in which the bets of a particular type are pooled, taxes and commissions are removed, and payoffs are calculated by sharing the pool among all of the winning bets. Licensees that operate race meets must withhold and pay to the Commission daily, for each authorized day of parimutuel wagering, a parimutuel tax that is a percentage of all the licensees' daily gross receipts from the licensees' in-state parimutuel machines.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

The receipts from the parimutuel tax must be deposited in the Washington Horse Racing Commission Operating Account (Account), in addition to any gifts, grants, or endowments the Commission receives. The Commission, or the Commission's designee, may authorize expenditures from the Account. Moneys in the Account must be used for the Commission's operating expenses, except as otherwise required in the terms of a gift, grant, or endowment.

Sums paid to the Commission, including license fees, but excluding licensee withholdings paid to the Commission related to nonprofit race meet and Washington bred only horse race payments, must be retained by the Commission for the payment of salaries of its members, secretary, clerical and office expenses, and all other expenses incurred.

The state may not pay for salary, wages, expenses, or compensation, of any kind, in connection with the work of the Commission.

Summary of Bill:

The provision prohibiting the state from paying any salary, wages, expenses, or compensation in connection with the work of the Commission is removed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.