



Highlights of Senate Bill 263 – Casino Implementation

Ohio Constitution Article XV, section 6, authorizing casino gaming in Columbus, Cincinnati, Cleveland, and Toledo, requires the General Assembly to pass laws to facilitate operation of the amendment. Below is a summary of the required implementing legislation.

Creates the Ohio Casino Control Commission to ensure the integrity of casino gaming and to license, regulate, investigate, and penalize casino operators, management and holding companies, employees, and vendors:

- Seven members appointed by the Governor with a Chair selected by the commission.
- Members serve staggered four-year terms and may be reappointed for a total of three terms.
- The commission appoints an executive director who serves at the pleasure of the commission and performs duties delegated by the commission.
- Requires the casino control commission to submit an annual report to the governor, senate president, and speaker that lists relevant financial data and actions taken by the commission.

Creates the Permanent Joint Committee on Gaming and Wagering made up of three members appointed by the president of the senate and three members appointed by the speaker. The committee:

- Reviews constitutional amendments, laws and rules governing the operation and administration of casino gaming and recommends changes.
- Makes an annual report to the Governor and General Assembly with respect to the operation and administration of casino gaming.
- Studies proposed changes to the constitution, laws and rules related to casino gaming and reports to the General Assembly on their adequacy.

Outlines license application, background check, and licensing procedures for casino operators, management and holding companies, employees and vendors.

Outlines suspension, revocation and renewal procedures for operator, management and holding company, employee and vendor licenses:

- A license shall be renewed for up to three years if a licensee is in compliance with applicable statutes and rules.
- The Commission may suspend, revoke or refuse to issue or renew a license after notice and a Chapter 119 adjudication.

Establishes fees:

- Upfront casino operator fee is \$50 million per facility.
- New operator, management company, holding company, gaming-related vendor, and employee license and renewal fees are set by commission rule, subject to the approval of the joint committee on gaming and wagering.
- Operator, management company, and holding company application fees are set at \$2 million per application.

Provides for investigations and inspections:

- Creates gaming agents that are specially trained peace officers employed by the commission to assist in carrying out commission duties and to conduct investigations.
- As it relates to state funds or public officials, specifies that the Inspector General may investigate wrongful acts or omissions committed by the commission, its employees, or entities regulated or licensed by the commission, or persons doing business with the state for casino-related matters.
- Allows the commission to inspect and examine casino facilities, inspect supplies and equipment, impound and seize equipment for examination, audit former gaming operations, investigated suspected violations of casino gaming laws.

Implements casino regulations, including:

- Prohibits a person under 21 from entering a casino facility unless the person is an employee who is between 18 and 21 and whose duties are not gaming-related.
- Requires casinos to use a cashless wagering system.
- Minimum and maximum wagers shall be determined by casino operators subject to approval of the commission.

Imposes criminal penalties for violations of casino gaming statutes.

Regarding two new liquor permits:

- Permit D5-n may be issued to a casino operator or management company. One permit may be issued per facility, and not more than four may be issued in Ohio. The fee for this permit is \$25,000.
- Hours of serving liquor are the same as under current law. There is no allowance for complimentary beverages.
- Permit D5-o may be issued to a restaurant located within a casino facility. There is no limit on the number of D-5o permits that may be issued. The fee for this permit is \$2,344.

Source: Senate Republican Caucus