

House Bill 674 (RULES COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE)

By: Representatives Smyre of the 132nd, Hugley of the 133rd, and Buckner of the 130th

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Part 2 of Article 2 of Chapter 12 of Title 16 of the Official Code of Georgia
2 Annotated, relating to bingo, so as to transfer the responsibility for regulation of bingo games
3 and issuance of bingo licenses from the Georgia Bureau of Investigation to the Department
4 of Revenue; to raise the limits on the amounts of prizes which may be awarded in such
5 games; to define certain terms relating to bingo; to provide for related matters; to provide an
6 effective date; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

7 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

8 style="text-align:center">**SECTION 1.**

9 Part 2 of Article 2 of Chapter 12 of Title 16 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,
10 relating to bingo, is amended by replacing "Director" with "Commissioner" and "director"
11 with "commissioner" wherever the former word occurs in:

- 12 (1) Code Section 16-12-51, relating to definitions pertaining to bingo;
- 13 (2) Code Section 16-12-52, relating to license required to operate bingo game and
14 recreational bingo exception;
- 15 (3) Code Section 16-12-53, relating to bingo licensing procedures, fees, and renewals;
- 16 (4) Code Section 16-12-54, relating to revocation of licenses and access to premises by
17 law enforcement agencies;
- 18 (5) Code Section 16-12-55, relating to certification of tax-exempt status of organization,
19 issuance of certificate of licensure, and evidentiary nature of certificate;
- 20 (6) Code Section 16-12-56, relating to issuance of annual one-day license to nonprofit,
21 tax-exempt school and application;
- 22 (7) Code Section 16-12-59, relating to annual report to be filed with the director;
- 23 (8) Code Section 16-12-61, relating to promulgation of necessary rules and regulations
24 by director authorized; and
- 25 (9) Code Section 16-12-62, relating to penalties.

26 **SECTION 2.**

27 Said part is further amended by replacing "Bureau of Investigation" with "Department of
28 Revenue" wherever the former words occur in:

- 29 (1) Code Section 16-12-51, relating to definitions pertaining to bingo; and
30 (2) Code Section 16-12-53, relating to bingo licensing procedures, fees, and renewals.

31 **SECTION 3.**

32 Said part is further amended by revising paragraph (1) of Code Section 16-12-51, relating
33 to definitions pertaining to bingo, as follows:

34 "(1) 'Bingo game' or 'nonprofit bingo game' means a game of chance played on cards
35 with numbered squares in which counters or indicators are placed on numbers chosen by
36 lot and won by covering a previously specified number or order of numbered squares and
37 a game of chance played on cards with numbered sections listing winning combinations
38 of letters and number symbols and containing hidden letter and number symbols where
39 each participant receives one or more cards which afford a participant an opportunity to
40 win something of value by opening, detaching, or otherwise removing one or more covers
41 from the card to reveal a set of number and letter symbols. A bingo game may be played
42 manually or with an electronic or computer device that stores the numbers from a player's
43 card or cards, tracks the numbers chosen by lot when such numbers are entered by the
44 player, and notifies the player of a winning combination. Such words, terms, or phrases,
45 as used in this paragraph, shall be strictly construed to include only the series of acts
46 generally defined as bingo and shall exclude all other activity."

47 **SECTION 4.**

48 Said part is further amended in Code Section 16-12-60, relating to regulation of bingo games
49 operated by nonprofit organizations, by revising subsection (f) as follows:

50 "(f) It shall be unlawful to award prizes in excess of ~~\$1,500.00~~ \$15,000.00 in cash or gifts
51 of equivalent value during any calendar day or ~~\$3,000.00~~ \$45,000.00 in cash or gifts of
52 equivalent value during any calendar week. It shall be unlawful to exceed such limits at any
53 combination of locations operated by a single licensee or such licensee's agents or
54 employees. It shall be unlawful for two or more licensees to pyramid the valuation of prizes
55 in such manner as to exceed the limits contained in this Code section. The term "equivalent
56 value" shall mean the fair market value of the gift on the date the gift is given as the prize
57 in a bingo game."

58

SECTION 5.

59 This Act shall become effective upon its approval by the Governor or upon its becoming law
60 without such approval.

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SECTION 6.

62 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.