

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 618

Session of
1975

INTRODUCED BY MESSRS. HASKELL, RITTER, HOPKINS, ZORD, CESSAR,
FISHER, MILLIRON AND GALLEN, MARCH 3, 1975

AS REPORTED FROM COMMITTEE ON LAW AND JUSTICE, HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES, AS AMENDED, JUNE 25, 1975

AN ACT

1 Defining, authorizing and regulating the conducting of the game
2 of "bingo" and fixing penalties.

3 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
4 hereby enacts as follows:

5 Section 1. Bingo Defined.--For the purposes of this act,
6 "bingo" is a game in which each player has a card or board
7 containing five horizontal rows all but the central one
8 containing five figures. The central row has four figures with
9 the word "free" marked in the center thereof. Any preannounced
10 combination of spaces when completed by a player constitutes
11 "bingo." In the absence of a preannouncement of a combination of
12 spaces, any combination of five in a row whether horizontal or
13 vertical when completed by a player constitutes "bingo" when its
14 four numbers are announced and covered. A wheel or other
15 mechanical device may be used by any person conducting the game
16 of "bingo," and any such person may award to any player or
17 players first completing any combination constituting "bingo" a

1 prize so long as such prize awarded shall not exceed a value of
2 \$100 for any one such game of "bingo" except for jackpot games
3 which shall not exceed \$500 for one such game of "bingo."

4 Section 2. Associations Permitted to Conduct Bingo.--Any
5 association, for a charitable or civic purpose, when licensed
6 pursuant to this act, may conduct the game of "bingo" as defined
7 in section 1 of this act. For purposes of this act the term
8 "association" means a volunteer fire company, ambulance
9 association or a religious, charitable, fraternal, veterans,
10 civic or other LAWFUL association organized as a nonprofit <—
11 organization; the term "charitable purpose" means benevolent or
12 philanthropic purpose; and, the term "civic purpose" means
13 community purpose.

14 Section 3. Construction.--The game "bingo" as defined in
15 section 1 and licensed pursuant to this act shall not be
16 construed as a lottery or as gambling within the meaning of
17 Title 18 of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes known as the
18 "Crimes Code."

19 Section 4. Licenses.--In every county, the county treasurer
20 shall license, upon application, any association to conduct the
21 game of "bingo".

22 The license fee to be charged to each nonprofit association
23 shall be \$10 per annum.

24 The license fee to be charged to each agricultural
25 association or county fair shall be \$100 per annum.

26 The fees collected pursuant to this section shall be paid by
27 the county treasurer into the general fund of the county and
28 used for county purposes.

29 Licenses issued pursuant to this section shall be publicly
30 displayed at games conducted by licensees.

1 The county treasurer shall not issue a license to and shall
2 revoke the license of any association whenever he finds that:

3 (1) Compensation, salary or fee are paid to anyone for
4 setting up or conducting the games of bingo except agricultural
5 associations or county fairs licensed under this act which shall
6 be permitted to hire a firm or individual to promote, set-up and
7 conduct "bingo."

8 (2) Any of the funds derived from the operation of the game
9 of bingo are used for any purpose other than for charitable,
10 civic or religious work or community fire prevention and
11 protection or purposes not necessary and/or incidental to the
12 lawful operation of the said association.

13 (3) Any person under the age of 18 is playing bingo as
14 defined under this act.

15 (4) The facility in which any game of bingo is to be played
16 does not have adequate means of ingress and egress or does not
17 have adequate sanitary facilities available in the area.

18 Section 5. Penalty.--Any association violating the
19 provisions of this act shall be guilty of a summary offense, and
20 upon conviction thereof shall be sentenced to pay a fine not
21 exceeding \$500 PLUS A FORFEITURE OF ALL PROCEEDS FROM SUCH
22 ILLEGAL OPERATIONS and shall forfeit any license issued to him
23 and shall be ineligible for a license renewal for one year
24 thereafter.

25 All actions against an association for operating a lottery or
26 gambling by conducting the game of bingo shall be brought under
27 the provisions of this act and not under any provision of Title
28 18 of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes known as the
29 "Crimes Code."

30 Section 6. This act shall take effect immediately.