

## Maryland Code

Sec. 12-101 Definitions:

(f) **Organization.**- "**Organization**" includes:

- (1) a fraternal, religious, civic, patriotic, educational, or charitable organization;
- (2) a volunteer fire company, rescue squad, or auxiliary unit;
- (3) a veterans' organization or club;
- (4) a bona fide nonprofit organization that is raising money for an exclusively charitable, athletic, or educational purpose;  
or
- (5) any organization that is authorized to conduct a gaming event under Subtitle 1 or 2 of this title or Title 13 of this article.

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Veterans' Organizations Chapter 1 of the second special session of 2012 authorizes the State Lottery and Gaming Control Agency to issue certain veterans' organizations a license for up to five instant ticket lottery (pull tab) machines.

Veterans' organizations in counties on the Eastern Shore are not eligible. After deductions for commissions (to the veterans' organizations) and prize payouts, the proceeds go to the State general fund. Beginning July 1, 2014, 10% of the proceeds will be distributed to the Maryland Veterans Trust Fund.

August 17, 2012

Greetings!

In case you've been on vacation or perhaps are so thrilled about Romney's pick of Paul Ryan as his running mate you've missed local news, let me bring you up to speed.

At midnight Tuesday, Maryland house speaker Michael Busch called "Sine Die" on a special legislative session that expanded gambling in Maryland. I'd like to explain from my perspective what happened during the session and why, ultimately, I voted "no" for the expanded gaming bill.

Before this session even began, I was asked numerous times to state my position and I didn't. Although I have never been a fan of gaming, I wanted to be open minded for the hearings and to reserve my decision after I knew the facts.

The more I read and heard, the more I knew that SB/HB 1 was a flawed piece of legislation.

The Governor saw this site as a means to make money for Maryland and in order to get it on the ballot, the bill had to be completely ready to go by August 20th. Just a side note: it will still be several years before the Prince George's casino is up and running and making a profit for the state.

The bill passed, 71-57, after countless hours in the Ways and Means Committee, the offering of over 50 amendments, long House floor debates, and much behind the scenes arm-twisting.

There is one positive for me in all of this - I was able to pass an amendment to allot gaming machines to our Veterans' organizations, something they had been requesting for years. I arrived in Annapolis last Friday, ready to do everything that I could to make this happen for our veterans. These charitable organizations had been told that they would be next in line after the first five sites were up and had been waiting in good faith. Enter MGM, and the Veterans were bumped-- again.

My first amendment, which allowed for a small amount of gaming machines in Veterans Clubs was offered to the Ways and Means Committee and quickly shot down by the Democrats, with the exception of Delegate Jolene Ivey. I withdrew that amendment and began work on another that was much like Senator Glassman's Veterans amendment previously rejected on the Senate floor.

**Here's where it gets good!**

During the day on Tuesday the Democrat leadership still didn't have the votes to pass SB/HB 1. In desperation, realizing the Governor's gaming bill would fail, leadership called an emergency meeting of the Veterans Caucus and was able to get more votes in exchange for Veterans gaming machines. Suddenly my amendment was in play.

Delegate Joseph "Sonny" Minnick, chair of the Veterans' Caucus, and a veteran himself, was prepared to offer an amendment identical to mine and the gaming bill would pass. Members of the Republican caucus insisted that I offer the amendment (which was a done deal at this point) but I asked Delegate Minnick to offer it.

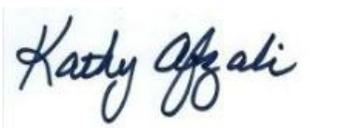
What happened after that was very interesting. My fellow Republicans (especially my colleague Delegate Joe Boteler) were insensed that my amendment had been voted down the day before, but now was being used as a bribe by Democrats. A vigorous floor debate ensued. I stood up and asked my colleagues to support the amendment even though we hated the means for which it was being used. The amendment passed and I am so pleased about that.

The vets will get their machines and can keep 5.5% of the gross. On top of that, if the gaming bill dies at the ballot box, the veterans **still get their machines!** For that I am tickled pink. I said I'd get things done in Annapolis and Tuesday I did.

Thank you for your patience Veterans!

I hope this helps you understand a little bit better what happened in Annapolis during this Special Session. If you have any other questions or concerns, as always, please feel free to contact me by phone or email.

Your Delegate,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kady Afzali". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. It is positioned to the left of a vertical line that extends downwards from the signature area.