
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO GAMING.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The Hawaii Revised Statutes is amended by
2 adding a new chapter to be appropriately designated and to read
3 as follows:

4 **"CHAPTER**

5 **GAMING ON CRUISE SHIPS**

6 § -1 **Definitions.** As used in this chapter, unless the
7 context otherwise requires:

8 "Adjusted gross receipts" means the gross receipts less
9 winnings paid to wagerers.

10 "Cruise ship" means an oceangoing passenger ship that
11 weighs over 70,000 gross tonnes; is used for recreational and
12 leisure voyages that last over one hundred hours; includes
13 onboard amenities, attractions, activities, and entertainment
14 options for passengers; and charges a fee for and provides
15 cruise ship cabins to passengers.

16 "Cruise ship cabin" means an accommodation or a living
17 quarter on a cruise ship that is provided to a passenger.



1 "Department" means the department of commerce and consumer
2 affairs.

3 "Docked" or "docking" means the process of bringing a
4 cruise ship alongside a dock for the purpose of embarking and
5 disembarking passengers.

6 "Gaming on cruise ships" means the operation of games
7 aboard a cruise ship pursuant to this chapter, including
8 baccarat, twenty-one, poker, craps, slot machine, video game of
9 chance, roulette wheel, klondike table, punch-board, faro
10 layout, keno layout, numbers ticket, push card, jar ticket, pull
11 tab, or other table game of chance.

12 "Gross receipts" means the total amount of money wagered or
13 exchanged for the purchase of chips, tokens, or electronic cards
14 by passengers on a cruise ship.

15 **§ -2 Gaming on cruise ships; authorized.** (a) Gaming
16 operations on cruise ships and the system of wagering
17 incorporated therein, as defined in this chapter, are authorized
18 only to the extent that they are carried out in accordance with
19 this chapter.



(b) Gaming on cruise ships authorized pursuant to this chapter may be conducted while docked at a state harbor or while traveling within any state waters; provided that:

(1) Cruise ships may conduct gaming operations while docked at a state harbor no more than one hour prior to departure from the dock; and

(2) Cruise ships shall cease all gaming operations within one hour after docking at a state harbor.

§ -3 Conduct of gaming on cruise ships. Gaming on cruise ships shall be permitted while a cruise ship is docked at a state harbor or while the cruise ship is traveling in state waters, subject to the following requirements:

(1) The cruise ship shall comply fully with 46 United States Code section 55102;

(2) The cruise ship shall comply with the requirements of section -2(b)(1) and (2);

(3) Minimum and maximum wagers on games shall be set by the owner or operator of the cruise ship;

(4) Wagers may be received only from a passenger present on a cruise ship. No passenger present on a cruise ship shall place or attempt to place a wager on behalf



1 of another person who is not present on the cruise
2 ship;

3 (5) Wagering shall not be conducted with money or other
4 negotiable currency, except for wagering on slot
5 machines;

6 (6) A person under the age of twenty-one shall not be
7 permitted on an area of a cruise ship where gaming is
8 being conducted, except for a person at least eighteen
9 years of age who is an employee of the casino on a
10 cruise ship. No cruise ship employee under the age of
11 twenty-one shall perform any function involved in
12 gaming by the patrons. No person under the age of
13 twenty-one shall be permitted to make a wager under
14 this chapter;

15 (7) All tokens, chips, or electronic cards used to make
16 wagers shall be purchased aboard the cruise ship. The
17 tokens, chips, or electronic cards may be purchased by
18 means of an agreement under which the owner or
19 operator of a cruise ship extends credit to a cruise
20 ship passenger. The tokens, chips, or electronic
21 cards may be used while aboard the cruise ship only



1 for the purpose of making wagers on authorized games;

2 and

3 (8) Any additional rules adopted by the department

4 pursuant to chapter 91.

5 § -4 **Wagering tax; rate; distribution.** A wagering tax
6 shall be imposed on the adjusted gross receipts received from
7 games authorized under this chapter at the rate of twenty per
8 cent. The tax imposed by this section shall be paid by the
9 owner or operator of the cruise ship to the department of
10 taxation no later than fourteen days following the last day of
11 each month in which the wagers were made and shall be deposited
12 into the general fund of the State. The wagering tax imposed by
13 this section shall be in lieu of all other state taxes on gross
14 or adjusted gross receipts, except income taxes, including taxes
15 levied under chapters 237 and 239.

16 § -5 **Records; information.** (a) An owner or operator of
17 a cruise ship shall keep books and records in a manner that
18 clearly shows:

19 (1) The total amount of gross receipts from the operations
20 of the cruise ship casino; and



(2) The total amount of the adjusted gross receipts from the operations of the cruise ship casino.

(b) The cruise ship owner shall furnish to the department reports and information as the department may require for purposes of determining the wagering tax under section -4.

§ -6 Prohibited activities; penalty. (a) A person shall be guilty of a misdemeanor for any of the following:

(1) Intentionally conducting gaming on a cruise ship other than in the manner authorized under this chapter;

(2) Knowingly permitting a person under twenty-one years of age to make a wager on a cruise ship; or

(3) Knowingly violating section -3(6).

(b) A person wagering or accepting a wager at any location outside a cruise ship shall be subject to the penalties in part III of chapter 712.

(c) A person shall be guilty of a class C felony if the person does any of the following:

(1) Cheats at a game in a cruise ship casino, including:

(A) Altering or misrepresenting the outcome of a game on which wagers have been made after the outcome



1 is made sure but before it is revealed to the
2 players;

3 (B) Placing a bet after acquiring knowledge, not
4 available to all players, of the outcome of a
5 game that is subject of the bet or to aid a
6 person in acquiring the knowledge for the purpose
7 of placing a bet contingent on that outcome; or

8 (C) Using counterfeit chips or tokens; and

9 (2) Claims, collects, or takes, or attempts to claim,
10 collect, or take, money or anything of value in or
11 from a game played in a cruise ship casino, with
12 intent to defraud, without having made a wager
13 contingent on winning the game or taking an amount of
14 money or thing of value of greater value than the
15 amount won.

16 (d) Except as provided in section 712-1222.5(3), any
17 cruise ship used for the conduct of gaming on cruise ships in
18 violation of section -3, shall be subject to section 712-
19 1222.5.

20 § -7 **Prohibited activities; civil penalties.** Any person
21 who conducts gaming on cruise ships in violation of this



chapter, in addition to other penalties provided, shall be subject to a civil penalty equal to the amount of gross receipts derived from wagering, whether unauthorized or authorized, conducted on that day.

§ -8 Rules. The department shall adopt rules pursuant to chapter 91 to implement this chapter."

SECTION 2. Chapter 712, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by adding a new section to part III to be appropriately designated and to read as follows:

"§712- Gaming on cruise ships; exempted. This part shall not apply to gaming on cruise ships as authorized under chapter ."

SECTION 3. Section 712-1231, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

"(a) Definition. "Social gambling" means gambling in which all of the following conditions are present:

(1) Players compete on equal terms with each other; [and]

(2) No player receives, or becomes entitled to receive, anything of value or any profit, directly or indirectly, other than the player's personal gambling winnings; [and]



(3) No other person, corporation, unincorporated association, or entity receives or becomes entitled to receive, anything of value or any profit, directly or indirectly, from any source, including but not limited to permitting the use of premises, supplying refreshments, food, drinks, service, lodging or entertainment; ~~and~~

(4) It is not conducted or played in or at a hotel, motel, cruise ship pursuant to chapter , bar, nightclub, cocktail lounge, restaurant, massage parlor, billiard parlor, or any business establishment of any kind, public parks, public buildings, public beaches, school grounds, churches or any other public area; ~~and~~

(5) None of the players is below the age of majority; and

(6) The gambling activity is not bookmaking."

SECTION 4. The department of commerce and consumer affairs shall submit an implementation plan for gaming on cruise ships established pursuant to section 1 of this Act, including any proposed legislation, to the legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the regular session of 2027.



SECTION 5. This Act does not affect rights and duties that matured, penalties that were incurred, and proceedings that were begun before its effective date.

SECTION 6. New statutory material is underscored.

SECTION 7. This Act shall take effect upon its approval; provided that section 1 of this Act shall take effect on August 1, 2027.

INTRODUCED BY:

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JAN 23 2026



H.B. NO. 1945

Report Title:

Gaming on Cruise Ships; Authorization; Wagering Tax; Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs; Report

Description:

Beginning 8/1/2027, authorizes gaming on cruise ships while a cruise ship is traveling within any state waters or for specified times while docked at a state harbor. Imposes a twenty per cent wagering tax on the adjusted gross receipts derived from gaming on cruise ships. Requires the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs to report to the Legislature.

The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.

