

JAN 23 2026

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## A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO GAMBLING.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that social gambling may  
2 be harmful to residential neighborhoods in which it takes place.  
3 For example, gambling activities in private homes may lead  
4 neighbors to complain about excess noise. The legislature  
5 believes that the affirmative defense of social gambling should  
6 not be available to a defendant if the defendant's gambling  
7 activities cause repeated noise complaints that disturb  
8 neighbors and monopolize police resources.

9 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to provide that a  
10 defendant may not assert social gambling as an affirmative  
11 defense if the gambling activity occurred at the defendant's  
12 residence and gambling activities have resulted in multiple  
13 recent documented noise complaints.

14 SECTION 2. Section 712-1231, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
15 amended to read as follows:

16 **"§712-1231 Social gambling; definition and specific  
17 conditions, affirmative defense.** (a) Definition. "Social



1       "gambling" means gambling in which all of the following  
2       conditions are [present:] met:  
3           (1) Players compete on equal terms with each other; [and]  
4           (2) No player receives, or becomes entitled to receive,  
5                       anything of value or any profit, directly or  
6                       indirectly, other than the player's personal gambling  
7                       winnings; [and]  
8           (3) No other person, corporation, unincorporated  
9                       association, or entity receives or becomes entitled to  
10                  receive, anything of value or any profit, directly or  
11                  indirectly, from any source, including [but not  
12                  limited to permitting] value or profit for providing  
13                  the use of premises, [supplying refreshments,] food<sup>[r]</sup>  
14                  or drinks, [servicee,] services, lodging, or  
15                  entertainment; [and]  
16           (4) It is not conducted or played in or at a hotel, motel,  
17                  bar, nightclub, cocktail lounge, restaurant, massage  
18                  parlor, billiard parlor, or any business establishment  
19                  of any kind, public parks, public buildings, public  
20                  beaches, school grounds, churches or any other public  
21                  area; [and]



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

2 (6) The gambling activity is not bookmaking.

3 (b) Affirmative defense:

4 (1) In any prosecution for an offense described in

5 [+]section[+] 712-1223, 712-1224, 712-1225 or 712-

6 1226, a defendant may assert the affirmative defense

7 that the gambling activity in question was [a] social

8 gambling [game] as defined in [+]section 712-1231(a).]

9 subsection (a); provided that a defendant may not

10 assert the affirmative defense of social gambling if:

11 (A) The gambling activities occurred at the

12 defendant's residence; and

13 (B) Gambling activities at the defendant's residence

14 have resulted in \_\_\_\_\_ or more prior noise

15 complaints to police, as documented by police

16 reports, within the preceding \_\_\_\_\_ months.

17 (2) If the defendant asserts [the] social gambling as an

18 affirmative defense, the defendant shall have the

19 burden of [going forward with] providing evidence to

20 prove the facts constituting [such] the defense

21 [unless such facts are supplied by the testimony of



1                   ~~the prosecuting witness or circumstance in such~~  
2                   ~~testimony, and of proving such facts by a~~  
3                   ~~preponderance of evidence.] by a preponderance of the~~  
4                   evidence.

5                   (c) [In any] No prosecution for an offense described in  
6                   this part [~~the fact~~] shall be required to prove in its prima  
7                   facie case that the gambling activity involved was other than  
8                   [~~a~~] social gambling [~~game shall not be an element of the offense~~  
9                   ~~to be proved by the prosecution in making out its prima facie~~  
10                  ~~case~~]."

11                  SECTION 3. This Act does not affect rights and duties that  
12                  matured, penalties that were incurred, and proceedings that were  
13                  begun before its effective date.

14                  SECTION 4. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed  
15                  and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

16                  SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

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INTRODUCED BY: Rachel Janssen



S.B. NO. 2893

**Report Title:**

Gambling; Social Gambling; Affirmative Defense; Noise Complaints

**Description:**

Provides that a defendant may not assert social gambling as an affirmative defense if the gambling activity occurred at the defendant's residence and gambling activities have resulted in multiple recent documented noise complaints.

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

