



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph A. Griffo

Griffo: Gaming Commission must finalize Charitable Gaming Act regulations now

JOSEPH A. GRIFFO November 22, 2021

| ISSUE: **CHARITABLE GAMING ACT**

After years of delays by the New York State Gaming Commission, state Sen. Joseph Griffo, R-I-C-Rome, is calling for the formulation of regulations for the Charitable Gaming Act or for commission members to be removed if they do not take such action.

Sen. Griffo recently sent a letter to Gov. Kathy Hochul in which he expressed his concerns with the Gaming Commission's failure to act on this matter. The letter comes after media accounts detailed that the commission is seeking proposals for new casinos in the New York City area and outlined questionable practices undertaken by the agency.

"The Gaming Commission, now under your administration's direction, must act and formulate the final regulations so that these deserving entities may host events and conduct business to maximum effect," **Sen. Griffo wrote.** "Should the agency fail to formalize regulations prior to the beginning of the holiday season, I would suggest that the six individuals who sit on the Commission be relieved of their duties and replaced by people who will not deprive perfectly good charities of the opportunity to raise money and do business the way the law intends."

The Charitable Gaming Act, which was cosponsored by Sen. Griffo, was signed into law Dec. 18, 2017. It would allow non-profit charitable groups to sell raffle tickets online and accept debit/credit card payments for fundraising activities. State regulations overseeing charitable donations had previously required cash-only sales of raffle tickets, which negatively affected local charitable raffles.

However, despite a June 2018 deadline to finalize regulations, the Gaming Commission has yet to take such action. This has impeded and limited fundraising activities for charitable organizations throughout the state.

“It is unacceptable that the Gaming Commission still has not formulated and promulgated regulations for the Charitable Gaming Act,” **Sen. Griffo said.** “This legislation has the potential to help so many people in need across the state, which is why I was proud to support it. The Gaming Commission’s inaction has undermined the important fundraising efforts of numerous local charities and organizations and made it more difficult for them to help our communities.”

The full text of Sen. Griffo’s letter to Gov. Hochul is below:

The Honorable Kathy Hochul

Governor of New York State

NYS State Capitol Building

Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Hochul:

On Wednesday, October 20, 2021, the New York State Gaming Commission issued a “request for expressions of interest” for the potential siting of three casinos in the New York City region – an effort to be undertaken at a time when most of the casinos which have already been approved are routinely underperforming and, in some instances, requesting the state to bail them out. As a senator representing an area with a large number of not-for-profits that have been requesting that the Gaming Commission fulfill their responsibility by finalizing regulations to allow them to secure monies through online transaction, I am requesting that the agency finish the tasks that were assigned to it more than three years ago before taking on any new business.

The Charitable Gaming Act was signed into law in December 2017. Had the Gaming Commission performed its duties responsibly and formulated regulations as the law stipulated for it to go into effect, the various not-for-profits that stand to benefit would have been able to sell charitable raffle tickets online as well as make those sales through debit and credit card transactions. As it stands, the June 2018 deadline for those regulations to have been formulated was completely ignored by the Gaming Commission. Unfortunately, this dereliction of duty comes with only one consequence: the inability of not-for-profits to perform 21st century transactions in an effort to benefit the people they serve.

The Gaming Commission, now under your administration’s direction, must act and formulate the final regulations so that these deserving entities may host events and conduct business to maximum effect. Should the agency fail to formalize regulations prior to the beginning of the holiday season, I would suggest that the six individuals who sit on the Commission be relieved of their duties and replaced by people who will not deprive perfectly good charities of the opportunity to raise money and do business the way the law intends.

Sincerely,

Joseph A. Griffo

Senator, 47th District

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