

Alaska State Legislature

Session:
State Capitol
Suite 125
Juneau, AK 99801
Phone: (907) 465-2995
Fax: (907) 465-6592



Interim:

716 W 4th Avenue, Suite 300
Anchorage, AK 99501-2133
Phone: (907) 269-0250
Fax: (907) 269-0249

Senator Lesil McGuire

Sponsor Statement for Senate Bill 157

“An Act defining arcade-style amusement devices.”

SB 157 is a housekeeping measure that aims to clarify that restaurants featuring arcade-style amusement games may lawfully operate in Alaska. Elsewhere in the United States, popular restaurant businesses feature arcade areas where patrons play games of skill to win tickets which can then be redeemed for toys and other novelties. Unfortunately, Alaska’s outdated laws are so vague that the legality of these operations is far from clear. SB 157 would clarify that playing these arcade-style amusement games of skill, winning tickets and redeeming them for small, non-cash prizes does not constitute gambling under Alaska law. By clarifying this issue, the risk for companies seeking to do business in Alaska will be eliminated.

These family-friendly businesses can be significant additions to Alaska’s economy. For example, Dave & Busters is seeking to open a location at the Dimond Center mall in Anchorage. It is anticipated that Dave & Buster’s will spend approximately \$10 million to build said location, and once operational will employ approximately 140-160 workers. Moreover, this addition to the Dimond Center is the keystone to a much larger renovation project for the mall that is anticipated to employ approximately 200 construction workers. In this time of economic uncertainty, this is an effective way to add well-paying jobs to Alaska’s economy. Passage of this bill will give businesses like Dave & Buster’s the sure-footed legal ground to move ahead with their plans.

Finally, it should be made absolutely clear that this narrow bill does not in any way legalize traditional gambling, nor does it legalize casino-style video gambling such as video poker, slots, or roulette. Once again, this bill only clarifies that arcade-style operations that award tickets to be redeemed for toys and other novelties are lawful.

I ask your support in passing this common-sense housekeeping measure that will benefit Alaska’s economy.