



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph A. Griffo

Griffo, Brindisi: Veto of Charitable Gaming Act will hurt fundraising raffle efforts to help those in need

JOSEPH A. GRIFFO November 29, 2016

| ISSUE: **CHARITY**, **CHARITABLE GAMBLING**, **GAMING**



UTICA – State Senator Joseph Griffo and Assemblyman Anthony Brindisi today expressed disappointment at the veto of legislation they co-sponsored that would have allowed charities to accept credit and debit card payments for raffles.

As a result of this veto, Senator Griffo and Assemblyman Brindisi said that many local charitable organizations and non-profit groups may not be able to continue these raffle fundraisers as a major source of revenue. As a result, both legislators are urging any affected organizations to contact the Governor's Office to voice their dismay and disappointment.

After the Charitable Gaming Act of 2016 ([A10249A/S7640A](#)) passed the Senate and Assembly earlier this year with the support of Senator Griffo and Assemblyman Brindisi, both legislators wrote Governor Cuomo urging him to sign this important legislation. But late Monday, the Governor vetoed this legislation, denying non-profits and charitable organizations the opportunity to more conveniently raise more funds to help children, the elderly, the disabled and other citizens in need.

In addition to using credit or debit cards for payment, this legislation would also have allowed charitable organizations to conduct their raffle ticket sales over the Internet, instead of accepting only cash payments.

Both Senator Griffo and Assemblyman Brindisi co-sponsored this legislation because of its importance to several not-for-profit agencies in their districts, which have faced serious restrictions on the major fundraising events that provide substantial revenue for their programs. Some of the agencies that would have benefited from these new payment options include the Children's Miracle Network, Sitrin Health Care and Hospice.

Senator Joseph Griffo said: "This legislation had the potential to help so many people in need all across the state, yet the Governor's rejection of the Charitable Gaming Act will further undermine the important fundraising efforts of so many local charities and organizations. The burdensome restrictions that remain in place concerning how charity raffle tickets can be purchased will continue to make it harder for these organizations to fund important programs, and I am disappointed by the Governor's veto."

Assemblyman Anthony Brindisi said: "I am incredibly disappointed the Governor chose to veto this well-intentioned legislation that would have allowed local charities and non-profits to utilize current technologies like online sales to aid in raising funds through raffles. As a result, many charities will continue to struggle to raise funds through raffles, thus limiting the amount of revenue they bring in to support meaningful projects that benefit the people that live in this community."

According to the Governor's veto message, the bill was rejected because it would violate the New York State Constitution, which states that charitable gaming may be offered only where a municipality has voted to authorize it. By allowing broad raffle sales over the Internet, the Governor stated, these fundraisers would essentially become statewide gaming occasions, not local ones.

The Governor also stated that he recognizes “the need to modernize charitable gaming laws,” and is directing the New York State Gaming Commission to work with the bill’s sponsors and interested stakeholders to recommend the appropriate changes to achieve this goal.

While Senator Griffo and Assemblyman Brindisi expressed their willingness to explore whatever changes must be made in order to get this legislation approved, both noted that no legal issues were previously raised concerning the legislation when it was reviewed by counsel.

Nevertheless, the legislators agree that the Governor could have given notice of his concerns so that any issues could be addressed through amendments to the bill.

Senator Griffo added, “We feel that the Governor’s comments and approach are disingenuous because there are other ways we could have addressed his concerns in order to get this legislation approved. Many local charitable organizations will now find their future fundraising efforts at risk, and I urge these groups to let the Governor know how disappointed they are.”

Assemblyman Brindisi added, “I have already heard from several local charities that, because this legislation was vetoed, they will now have to discontinue their raffles they have run for many years. I am urging my colleagues to continue to push forward in the upcoming legislative session to pass a bill to update the state's antiquated Gaming Laws so we can move into the 21st Century.”

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RELATED LEGISLATION

2015-S7640A

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- Introduced

- - In Committee Assembly
 - In Committee Senate
- - On Floor Calendar Assembly
 - On Floor Calendar Senate
- - Passed Assembly
 - Passed Senate
- Vetoed By Governor
- Signed By Governor
-

Enacts the "charitable gaming act of 2016"

May 11, 2016

Senate Floor Calendar

Sponsored by Patrick M. Gallivan

Do you support this bill?