

1                   A bill to be entitled  
2     An act relating to pari-mutuel wagering; amending s.  
3     550.01215, F.S.; authorizing certain permitholders to  
4     choose not to conduct live racing; providing that  
5     certain permitholders are not required to pay a  
6     specified tax; requiring certain permitholders to  
7     continue to conduct live racing until specified notice  
8     is provided to the Florida Gaming Control Commission;  
9     providing requirements for such notice; requiring  
10    certain notifications when permitholders are  
11    relocating; amending s. 550.054, F.S.; providing that  
12    thoroughbred racing permits may be transferred upon  
13    authorization of the commission; removing a  
14    requirement for certain referendums; amending s.  
15    550.09515, F.S.; removing a requirement that certain  
16    permits escheat to the state following nonpayment of  
17    taxes; amending s. 550.3345, F.S.; revising the entity  
18    that designates certain members of the board of  
19    directors of a specified not-for-profit corporation;  
20    revising the circumstances under which certain  
21    permitholders may relocated; amending s. 550.475,  
22    F.S.; revising when certain permitholders may lease  
23    certain facilities and training centers; prohibiting  
24    certain relocating permitholders from operating  
25    cardrooms in leased training centers; authorizing

26        certain lessors to remain eligible facilities;  
27        amending ss. 550.5251 and 550.6335, F.S.; conforming  
28        provisions to changes made by the act; providing an  
29        effective date.

30  
31    Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

32  
33        **Section 1. Paragraphs (a) and (b) of subsection (1) of**  
34        **Section 550.01215, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:**

35        550.01215 License application; periods of operation;  
36        license fees; bond.—

37        (1) Each permitholder shall annually, during the period  
38        between January 15 and February 4, file in writing with the  
39        commission its application for an operating license for a pari-  
40        mutuel facility for the conduct of pari-mutuel wagering during  
41        the next state fiscal year, including intertrack and simulcast  
42        race wagering. Each application for live performances must  
43        specify the number, dates, and starting times of all live  
44        performances that the permitholder intends to conduct. It must  
45        also specify which performances will be conducted as charity or  
46        scholarship performances.

47        (a) Each application for an operating license also must  
48        include:

49        1. For each permitholder, whether the permitholder intends  
50        to accept wagers on intertrack or simulcast events.

51           2. For each permitholder that elects to operate a  
52 cardroom, the dates and periods of operation the permitholder  
53 intends to operate the cardroom.

54           3. For each thoroughbred ~~racing~~ permitholder that elects  
55 to receive or rebroadcast out-of-state races, the dates for all  
56 performances that the permitholder intends to conduct.

57           (b)1. A greyhound permitholder may not conduct live  
58 racing. A thoroughbred permitholder, jai alai permitholder,  
59 harness horse racing permitholder, or quarter horse racing  
60 permitholder may elect not to conduct live racing or games. A  
61 ~~thoroughbred permitholder must conduct live racing.~~ A  
62 thoroughbred permitholder, greyhound permitholder, jai alai  
63 permitholder, harness horse racing permitholder, or quarter  
64 horse racing permitholder that does not conduct live racing or  
65 games retains its permit; is a pari-mutuel facility as defined  
66 in s. 550.002(23); if such permitholder has been issued a slot  
67 machine license, the facility where such permit is located  
68 remains an eligible facility as defined in s. 551.102(4),  
69 continues to be eligible for a slot machine license pursuant to  
70 s. 551.104(3), and is exempt from ss. 551.104(4)(c) and (10) and  
71 551.114(2); is eligible, but not required, to be a guest track  
72 and, if the permitholder is a harness horse racing permitholder,  
73 to be a host track for purposes of intertrack wagering and  
74 simulcasting pursuant to ss. 550.3551, 550.615, 550.625, and  
75 550.6305; and remains eligible for a cardroom license exempt

76 from requirements of s. 849.0876(5) and is not required to pay  
77 the tax under s. 849.086(13). A thoroughbred permitholder who  
78 operates a slot machine facility or cardroom shall offer a full  
79 schedule of live racing until such permitholder notifies the  
80 commission that it will no longer offer live racing. Notice  
81 under this subparagraph is not valid unless delivered on or  
82 after July 1, 2027, and contains the date on which the  
83 permitholder will no longer offer live racing, which may not be  
84 earlier than 3 years after the date of the notice. The  
85 permitholder is required to deliver such notice when relocating  
86 under to s. 550.3345 or s. 550.475 with authorization by the  
87 commission in accordance with s. 550.054.

88 2. A permitholder or licensee may not conduct live  
89 greyhound racing or dogracing in connection with any wager for  
90 money or any other thing of value in the state. The commission  
91 may deny, suspend, or revoke any permit or license under this  
92 chapter if a permitholder or licensee conducts live greyhound  
93 racing or dogracing in violation of this subparagraph. In  
94 addition to, or in lieu of, denial, suspension, or revocation of  
95 such permit or license, the commission may impose a civil  
96 penalty of up to \$5,000 against the permitholder or licensee for  
97 a violation of this subparagraph. All penalties imposed and  
98 collected must be deposited with the Chief Financial Officer to  
99 the credit of the General Revenue Fund.

100 **Section 2. Subsection (13) of section 550.054, Florida**

101 **Statutes, is amended to read:**

102       550.054 Application for permit to conduct pari-mutuel  
103 wagering.—

104       (13) ~~(a)~~ Notwithstanding any provisions of this chapter, a  
105 ~~no~~ thoroughbred horse racing permit or license issued under this  
106 chapter may ~~shall~~ be transferred, or reissued when such  
107 reissuance is in the nature of a transfer so as to permit or  
108 authorize a licensee to change the location of a thoroughbred  
109 horse racetrack ~~except~~ upon authorization by ~~proof in such form~~  
110 ~~as the commission may prescribe that a referendum election has~~  
111 ~~been held:~~

112       1. ~~If the proposed new location is within the same county~~  
113 ~~as the already licensed location, in the county where the~~  
114 ~~licensee desires to conduct the race meeting and that a majority~~  
115 ~~of the electors voting on that question in such election voted~~  
116 ~~in favor of the transfer of such license.~~

117       2. ~~If the proposed new location is not within the same~~  
118 ~~county as the already licensed location, in the county where the~~  
119 ~~licensee desires to conduct the race meeting and in the county~~  
120 ~~where the licensee is already licensed to conduct the race~~  
121 ~~meeting and that a majority of the electors voting on that~~  
122 ~~question in each such election voted in favor of the transfer of~~  
123 ~~such license.~~

124       ~~(b) Each referendum held under the provisions of this~~  
125 ~~subsection shall be held in accordance with the electoral~~

~~procedures for ratification of permits, as provided in s.~~  
~~550.0651. The expense of each such referendum shall be borne by~~  
~~the licensee requesting the transfer.~~

**Section 3. Paragraph (a) of subsection (3) of section**  
**550.09515, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:**

550.09515 Thoroughbred horse taxes; reissuance of  
~~abandoned interest in a permit following for~~ nonpayment of  
taxes.—

(3) (a) The permit of a thoroughbred ~~horse~~ permitholder  
conducting live thoroughbred performances who does not pay tax  
on handle for live thoroughbred horse performances for a full  
schedule of live races during any 2 consecutive state fiscal  
years shall be void and shall not be reissued ~~escheat to and~~  
~~become the property of the state~~ unless such failure to operate  
and pay tax on handle was the direct result of fire, strike,  
war, or other disaster or event beyond the ability of the  
permitholder to control. Financial hardship to the permitholder  
shall not, in and of itself, constitute just cause for failure  
to operate and pay tax on handle.

**Section 4. Paragraph (d) of subsection (2) of section**  
**550.3345, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:**

550.3345 Conversion of quarter horse permit to a limited  
thoroughbred permit.—

(2) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the holder  
of a quarter horse racing permit issued under s. 550.334 may,

151 within 1 year after the effective date of this section, apply to  
152 the commission for a transfer of the quarter horse racing permit  
153 to a not-for-profit corporation formed under state law to serve  
154 the purposes of the state as provided in subsection (1). The  
155 board of directors of the not-for-profit corporation must be  
156 comprised of 11 members, 4 of whom shall be designated by the  
157 applicant, 4 of whom shall be designated by the commission  
158 ~~Florida Thoroughbred Breeders' Association~~, and 3 of whom shall  
159 be designated by the other 8 directors, with at least 1 of these  
160 3 members being an authorized representative of another  
161 thoroughbred permitholder in this state. The not-for-profit  
162 corporation shall submit an application to the commission for  
163 review and approval of the transfer in accordance with s.  
164 550.054. Upon approval of the transfer by the commission, and  
165 notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, the  
166 not-for-profit corporation may, within 1 year after its receipt  
167 of the permit, request that the commission convert the quarter  
168 horse racing permit to a permit authorizing the holder to  
169 conduct pari-mutuel wagering meets of thoroughbred racing.  
170 Neither the transfer of the quarter horse racing permit nor its  
171 conversion to a limited thoroughbred permit shall be subject to  
172 the mileage limitation or the ratification election as set forth  
173 under s. 550.054(2) or s. 550.0651. Upon receipt of the request  
174 for such conversion, the commission shall timely issue a  
175 converted permit. The converted permit and the not-for-profit

corporation shall be subject to the following requirements:

(d) Racing under the permit may take place only at the location for which the original quarter horse racing permit was issued, which may be leased by the not-for-profit corporation for that purpose; however, the not-for-profit corporation may, without the conduct of any ratification election pursuant to s. 550.054(13) or s. 550.0651, move the location of the permit to another location in a ~~the same~~ county which has previously authorized pari-mutuel wagering provided that such relocation is approved under the zoning and land use regulations of the applicable county or municipality.

**Section 5. Section 550.475, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:**

550.475 Lease of pari-mutuel facilities by pari-mutuel permitholders.—

(1) Holders of valid pari-mutuel permits for the conduct of any pari-mutuel wagering in this state are entitled to lease any and all of the ~~their~~ facilities of ~~to~~ any other holder of a ~~same class~~ valid pari-mutuel permit or a thoroughbred training center holding a valid license issued by the commission, when located within a 50-mile ~~35-mile~~ radius of each other; and such lessee is entitled to a permit and license to conduct intertrack wagering and operate its race meet or jai alai games at the leased premises.

(2) Thoroughbred permitholders relocating pursuant to s.



550.3345 or s. 550.475 in accordance with s. 550.054 may not  
operate a cardroom at a leased training center.

(3) Notwithstanding any other provisions of law, the  
lessor of a pari-mutuel facility that has been issued a slot  
machine license or a cardroom license shall remain an eligible  
facility as defined in s. 551.102(4).

**Section 6. Subsection (1) of section 550.5251, Florida  
Statutes, is amended to read:**

550.5251 Florida thoroughbred racing; certain permits;  
operating days.—

(1) Each thoroughbred permitholder required to offer live  
racing shall annually, during the period commencing January 15  
of each year and ending February 4 of the following year, file  
in writing with the commission its application to conduct one or  
more thoroughbred racing meetings during the thoroughbred racing  
season commencing on the following July 1. Each application  
shall specify the number and dates of all performances that the  
permitholder intends to conduct during that thoroughbred racing  
season. On or before April 15 of each year, the commission shall  
issue a license authorizing each permitholder to conduct  
performances on the dates specified in its application. Up to  
March 28 of each year, each permitholder may request and shall  
be granted changes in its application to conduct performances;  
but thereafter, as a condition precedent to the validity of its  
license and its right to retain its permit, each permitholder

226 must operate the full number of days authorized on each of the  
227 dates set forth in its license.

228 **Section 7. Subsection (2) of section 550.6335, Florida**  
229 **Statutes, is amended to read:**

230 550.6335 Surcharge.—

231 (2) A thoroughbred ~~horse~~ permitholder that accepts wagers  
232 on out-of-state races may impose a surcharge on each winning  
233 ticket, or interstate pool, on such out-of-state race in an  
234 amount not to exceed 5 percent of each winning pari-mutuel  
235 winning ticket cashed. If a permitholder rebroadcasts such  
236 signal and elects to impose a surcharge, the surcharge shall be  
237 imposed on any winning ticket at any guest facility at the same  
238 rate as the surcharge on wagers accepted at its own facility.  
239 The proceeds from the surcharge shall be distributed as follows:  
240 if the wager is made at the host facility, then one-half of the  
241 proceeds shall be retained by the host permitholder and one-half  
242 shall be paid as purses at the host facility; if the wager is  
243 made at a guest facility, then one-half shall be retained by the  
244 guest permitholder, one-quarter shall be paid to the host  
245 permitholder, and one-quarter shall be paid as purses at the  
246 host facility.

247  
248 Any surcharge taken under this section must be calculated after  
249 breakage is deducted from the wagering pool.

250 **Section 8.** This act shall take effect July 1, 2026.