

HB 816 -- EXCURSION GAMBLING BOATS

SPONSOR: Meadows

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass" by the Committee on Tourism by a vote of 10 to 0.

This bill removes the provision that makes an excursion gambling boat licensee guilty of a class B misdemeanor if he or she exchanges tokens, chips, or other forms of credit to be used on gambling games for anything of value.

FISCAL NOTE: No impact on state funds in FY 2010, FY 2011, and FY 2012.

PROponents: Supporters say that because voters repealed the loss limits on gambling boats it no longer makes sense to prohibit casino customers from using casino chips to pay a waitress for a drink on the casino's gaming floor. It is inconvenient if you must leave the gaming floor to cash out chips in order to buy a drink. Customers who are not familiar with the law will sometimes refuse the drink after it's ordered because they do not want to leave their table. Waitresses are then required to buy the drinks with their own money and then be reimbursed by the customer. If a patron refuses to cash in to pay for the drink, the waitress loses money. Wait staff cannot be tipped with casino chips, although this is a very common practice in other states. Allowing customers to use casino chips to buy drinks will help the wait staff.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Meadows; and Dave Morton, Local 74-Service Workers United.

OPponents: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.