

# HOUSE BILL 228

C6

(PRE-FILED)

6lr0124

CF SB 231

**By: Chair, Appropriations Committee (By Request – Departmental – Labor)**

Requested: September 17, 2025

Introduced and read first time: January 14, 2026

## Assigned to: Appropriations

A BILL ENTITLED

## 1 AN ACT concerning

## **Horse Racing – Prohibited Acts – Slaughter of Racehorses for Commercial Purposes**

4 FOR the purpose of prohibiting a person from slaughtering or causing the slaughter of a  
5 racehorse in the State for certain commercial purposes; prohibiting a person from  
6 purchasing, selling, transferring, offering for sale, importing into the State, or  
7 transporting a racehorse if the person knows or reasonably should know that the  
8 racehorse will be slaughtered for certain commercial purposes; requiring certain  
9 fines collected by the State Racing Commission to be distributed to the racing Special  
10 Fund; authorizing the State Racing Commission and the State Department of  
11 Agriculture to revoke or suspend certain licenses under certain circumstances; and  
12 generally relating to the slaughter of racehorses for commercial purposes.

13 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
14 Article – Business Regulation  
15 Section 11-402  
16 Annotated Code of Maryland  
17 (2024 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

18 BY adding to  
19 Article – Business Regulation  
20 Section 11–1002  
21 Annotated Code of Maryland  
22 (2024 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

23 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,  
24 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

## **Article – Business Regulation**

**EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.**

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 11–402.

2       The Special Fund consists of:

- 3           (1)     the State share of daily licensee fees;
  - 4           (2)     pari–mutuel taxes;
  - 5           (3)     the impact aid under § 11–812 of this title;
  - 6           (4)     money from uncashed pari–mutuel tickets that are from bets made into
  - 7     the betting pools of licensees;
  - 8           (5)     any permit fees under §§ 11–820 and 11–832 of this title; [and]
  - 9           (6)     subject to § 11–403(a)(9) and (b) of this subtitle, money from the State
  - 10   Lottery Fund distributed under § 9–120(b) of the State Government Article; AND
- 11           **(7) ANY FINES COLLECTED UNDER § 11–1002(D) OF THIS TITLE.**

12 **11–1002.**

13       **(A) IN THIS SECTION, “RACEHORSE” MEANS A HORSE:**

- 14           **(1) BRED OR INTENDED FOR RACING, INCLUDING A WEANLING,**
- 15   **YEARLING, HORSE IN TRAINING, OR RACEHORSE BREEDING STOCK WITH A RECORD**
- 16   **OF HAVING PRODUCED OR SIRED OFFSPRING INTENDED FOR RACING; OR**
- 17           **(2) THAT HAS BEEN RECORDED ON THE BACKSTRETCH OF A TRACK IN**
- 18   **THE STATE, HAS HAD A RECORDED WORKOUT ON A TRACK IN THE STATE, OR HAS**
- 19   **PARTICIPATED IN A RACE MEETING IN THE STATE WHERE PARI–MUTUEL BETTING**
- 20   **IS ALLOWED.**

21       **(B) A PERSON MAY NOT:**

- 22           **(1) SLAUGHTER OR CAUSE THE SLAUGHTER OF A RACEHORSE IN THE**
- 23   **STATE FOR ANY COMMERCIAL PURPOSE, INCLUDING FOR HUMAN OR ANIMAL**
- 24   **CONSUMPTION; OR**
- 25           **(2) PURCHASE, SELL, TRANSFER, OFFER FOR SALE, IMPORT INTO THE**
- 26   **STATE, OR TRANSPORT A RACEHORSE IF THE PERSON KNOWS OR REASONABLY**
- 27   **SHOULD KNOW THAT THE RACEHORSE WILL BE SLAUGHTERED FOR A COMMERCIAL**
- 28   **PURPOSE, INCLUDING FOR HUMAN OR ANIMAL CONSUMPTION.**

1           **(C) (1) AN INDIVIDUAL WHO VIOLATES THIS SECTION IS GUILTY OF A**  
2           **MISDEMEANOR AND ON CONVICTION:**

3                   **(I) FOR A FIRST OFFENSE, IS SUBJECT TO A FINE NOT**  
4                   **EXCEEDING \$1,000 OR IMPRISONMENT NOT EXCEEDING 1 YEAR OR BOTH; OR**

5                   **(II) FOR A SECOND OR SUBSEQUENT OFFENSE, IS SUBJECT TO A**  
6                   **FINE NOT EXCEEDING \$2,000 OR IMPRISONMENT NOT EXCEEDING 1 YEAR OR BOTH.**

7                   **(2) A CORPORATION, PARTNERSHIP, OR ANY OTHER ENTITY THAT**  
8                   **VIOLATES THIS SECTION:**

9                   **(I) FOR A FIRST OFFENSE, IS SUBJECT TO A FINE NOT**  
10                  **EXCEEDING \$2,500; OR**

11                  **(II) FOR A SECOND OR SUBSEQUENT OFFENSE, IS SUBJECT TO A**  
12                  **FINE NOT EXCEEDING \$5,000.**

13                  **(D) FINES COLLECTED BY THE COMMISSION AS A RESULT OF VIOLATIONS**  
14                  **UNDER THIS SECTION SHALL BE DISTRIBUTED TO THE SPECIAL FUND ESTABLISHED**  
15                  **UNDER § 11-401 OF THIS TITLE.**

16                  **(E) IF THE COMMISSION OR THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**  
17                  **FINDS THAT A PERSON HAS VIOLATED THIS SECTION:**

18                   **(1) THE COMMISSION MAY REVOKE OR SUSPEND ANY LICENSE**  
19                  **ISSUED TO THE PERSON BY THE COMMISSION; AND**

20                   **(2) THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE MAY REVOKE OR**  
21                  **SUSPEND ANY LICENSE ISSUED TO THE PERSON BY THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF**  
22                  **AGRICULTURE.**

23                  **(F) THE COMMISSION, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE STATE DEPARTMENT**  
24                  **OF AGRICULTURE, SHALL ADOPT REGULATIONS TO CARRY OUT THE PROVISIONS OF**  
25                  **THIS SECTION.**

26                  **(G) NOTHING IN THIS SECTION SHALL BE CONSTRUED TO PROHIBIT**  
27                  **HUMANE EUTHANASIA OF A RACEHORSE BY A LICENSED VETERINARIAN FOR**  
28                  **REASONS UNRELATED TO COMMERCIAL PURPOSES, INCLUDING SEVERE INJURY,**  
29                  **MAIMING, OR INJURY THAT RESULTS IN NO QUALITY OF LIFE FOR THE RACEHORSE,**  
30                  **AS DETERMINED BY A LICENSED VETERINARIAN.**

**HOUSE BILL 228**

1            SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July  
2    1, 2026.