

TITLE 6: CRIMES AND CRIMINAL PROCEDURES
DIVISION 3: MISCELLANEOUS OFFENSES

§ 3154. Definitions.

For purposes of this article:

(a) “Gambling device” means:

(1) Any so-called “slot machine” or any other machine, electronic or mechanical device which awards prizes to the operator based upon the chance matching or alignment of symbols or insignia, and:

(A) Which, when operated, may deliver, as the result of the application of an element of chance, any thing of value as a prize; or

(B) By the operation of which a person may become entitled to receive, as the result of the application of an element of chance, any thing of value as a prize; or

(2) Any other machine or electrical or mechanical device (including, but not limited to, roulette wheels and similar devices) designed and manufactured primarily for use in connection with gambling, and:

(A) Which, when operated, may deliver, as the result of the application of an element of chance, any thing of value; or

(B) By the operation of which a person may become entitled to receive, as the result of the application of an element of chance, any thing of value.

(3) Poker amusement machines requiring an element of skill are not gambling devices.

(4) Electronic gaming machines or any electronic table game devices used for the purpose of playing a game traditionally played at tables, and includes any electronic device through which bets may be placed on a game played at a table are not gambling devices; provided they are licensed as required by 4 CMC 1503(a)(6). These electronic table games include a computer or server and any related hardware, software or other devices that are used to conduct gaming, either as a fully automated version or as a semi-automated version where the collection of bets and payout of winnings are automated. Electronic table games includes poker, roulette, baccarat, blackjack, craps, big wheel, slot machines, baccarat, pai gow and sic bo; and any variations or composites of such.

All electronic table games must comply with the latest International Technical Standards set by GLOBAL GAMING LABORATORIES INTERNATIONAL LLC or SIQ GAMING LABORATORIES to ensure that they are honest, secure, reliable and auditable.

(b) “Thing of value” means any money, coin, currency, check, chip, allowance, token, credit, merchandise, property, or any representative of value other than an additional chance or right to use.

Source: PL 3-70, § 4, modified; subsection (a)(4) added by PL 18-30 § 3 (Dec. 13, 2013).

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Commission Comment: PL 18-30 (Dec. 13, 2013) contained, in addition to savings and severability clauses, the following:

Section 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the “Tourism Entertainment and Destination Enhancement Act of 2013.”

Section 2. Purpose and Findings. The Legislature finds that tourism continues to play an important role in the Commonwealth’s economy. No other potential industry appears to have the capacity to generate the kind of revenue that tourism does. The Commonwealth’s struggle to remain competitive with other “sun and sand” resort destinations has challenged the legislature to enact policies that encourage and support tourism growth and maintain visitor interest in the Commonwealth. For tourism to succeed, the Commonwealth must not only promote itself as a sun and sand destination but as a destination filled with entertainment and leisure activities desired by visitors especially from the China market. To support the CNMI’s plan of sun and sand destination, it is vital that night time activities be created to keep our guests occupied. Other than the Thursday Night Market, the CNMI does not offer many other night time activities of any type. China is now the largest outbound tourist source country in Asia, having overtaken Japan. Total outbound tourism during 2011 is expected to reach 65 million visitor trips. The Legislature finds that countries with gaming entertainment are becoming a preferred holiday destination especially for Chinese tourists. Experiences in other markets demonstrate that gaming has evolved as a core form of entertainment for millions of individuals worldwide. In 2010, a survey of visitors to Macau indicated that 63% of the visitors who came to Macau said that gaming entertainment was the primary attraction for visiting Macau. The legislature also finds that Saipan has successfully marketed Saipan to Chinese tourist. Over 1,500 Chinese tourists a week has made Saipan a destination of choice and there is a need to provide desired entertainment for these guests and at the same time generate revenue for the CNMI through these after-dark activities on the island of Saipan. Based on charter flights plan, the number of Chinese travelers and stay on Saipan will increase to 2,100 per week by July 2013. With the increase entry of Chinese tourists into the CNMI, there is solid evidence that spending at duty free shops reached ultimate sales results over any other period. Allowing electronic table games will give a competitive edge to the NMI in the regional tourism scene, adding the allure of premier after dark entertainment to the island’s stunning beaches and beautiful green interior welcoming people to a laid back lifestyle.

The purpose of this bill is to authorize the operation of electronic table games to bolster the CNMI economy, create local jobs and most importantly provide night time activities to our guests. The authorization of table games is intended to supplement slot machine and poker machine gaming by increasing revenues to the Commonwealth and providing new employment opportunities by creating skilled jobs for individuals related

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to the conduct of table games at licensed facilities in this Commonwealth.
This act is consistent with Section 1 of Article XXI of the Northern
Marianas Constitution.