

Act Number:	09-132	
Bill Number:	6358	
Senate Pages:	4692-4705	14
House Pages:	3035-3040	6
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**CONNECTICUT
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
SENATE**

**PROCEEDINGS
2009**

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THE CLERK:

Immediate roll call has been ordered in the Senate. Will all Senators please return to the chamber. Immediate roll has been ordered in the Senate. Will all Senators please return to the chamber

THE CHAIR:

Have all Senators voted? If all Senators have voted, please check your vote. The machine will be locked. The Clerk will call the tally.

THE CLERK:

Motion on passage of House Bill 6328 in concurrence with the action in the House:

Total Number Voting	36
Necessary for Adoption	19
Those voting Yea	33
Those voting Nay	3
Those absent and not voting	0

THE CHAIR:

The bill passes.

Mr. Clerk.

THE CLERK:

Calendar Number 631, File Numbers 5667 and 926, House Bill 6358, AN ACT CONCERNING ADDITIONAL

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OFF-TRACK BETTING BRANCH FACILITIES, as amended by House Amendment Schedule A, favorable report of the Committees on Public Safety, Planning and Development and Finance, Revenue and Bonding.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Stillman.

SENATOR STILLMAN:

Thank you, Mr. President. I move the Joint Committee's favorable report and passage of the bill in occurrence with the House.

THE CHAIR:

Acting on acceptance and approval of the bill, ma'am, would you like to remark?

SENATOR STILLMAN:

Yes, please, sir. This bill, as amended in the House, increases the number of off-track betting facilities that may operate as simulcasting facilities from 10:00 to 12:00. It requires one to be in Milford and the other to be in Putnam. This will result in a small revenue gain for the state as well as those two municipalities.

House Amendment A requires that the Gaming Policy Board and the legislative bodies of those two communities approve these additional simulcasting

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facilities, and I would appreciate its passage.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, ma'am.

Will you remark? Will you remark further?

Senator McKinney.

SENATOR MCKINNEY:

Thank you, Mr. President. Mr. President, if I could, a few questions through you to the proponent.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Stillman.

SENATOR MCKINNEY:

Thank you, Mr. President. Senator Stillman --

THE CHAIR:

Excuse me, Senator McKinney. Senator Crisco, could you please take your cell phone outside, please. Thank you.

Senator McKinney.

SENATOR MCKINNEY:

Thank you, Mr. President. Senator Stillman, as I understand it, there are currently 18 off-track betting, or OTB, facilities in the state of Connecticut. Through you, how many of those facilities currently have simulcast?

Through you, Mr. President.

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THE CHAIR:

Senator Stillman.

SENATOR STILLMAN:

Through you, Mr. President, it's my understanding that there are ten within the state.

THE CHAIR:

Senator McKinney.

SENATOR MCKINNEY:

Thank you, Mr. President. And through you, Mr. President, is the Torrington OTB facility one that has a simulcast? Though you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Stillman.

SENATOR STILLMAN:

Excuse me, Mr. President. Could the Senator kindly repeat the question. I cannot -- I can't hear.

THE CHAIR:

This is number three for the day. If you have conversations, please take them outside the chamber. We're trying to do business here, and I really don't want be here until 3:30 again this morning. Thank you.

Go ahead, Senator Stillman.

SENATOR STILLMAN:

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Thank you, sir.

THE CHAIR:

Senator McKinney, could you please repeat your question.

SENATOR MCKINNEY:

Thank you, Mr. President, and at risk of being off topic, I don't want to be here until 3:30 in the morning either, sir. So thank you for that.

THE CHAIR:

I've seen you then, also.

SENATOR MCKINNEY:

Through you, Mr. President, I believe within the last session of the Legislature, the prior two years, the Torrington facility did not have simulcast, and we passed legislation to give them simulcast. And at the same time, simulcast was removed from another facility, keeping the total simulcast at ten. And I'm just asking, through you, Mr. President, if that's a correct understanding of the Torrington facility and where we are at ten right now.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Stillman.

SENATOR STILLMAN:

Thank you, sir. Through you to Senator McKinney,

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you are correct, sir.

THE CHAIR:

Senator McKinney.

SENATOR MCKINNEY:

And through you, Mr. President, while obviously we can pass this bill and we can have a hundred OTB facilities if we so chose, as one who spent some time talking to a number of different advocates for providing simulcast to the Torrington facility, it was certainly my direct understanding through the advocates that, at that time, were they to get simulcast at Torrington in exchange for giving up simulcast in another facility, they would not seek to increase the number of simulcast facilities beyond the ten currently.

So obviously, while I understand we can do this and they can change their mind, I guess I'd at least like to know, through you, Mr. President, if that is the chairwoman of the Public Safety's understanding of where we were prior to this legislation.

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Stillman.

SENATOR STILLMAN:

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Thank you, Mr. President. Through you to Senator McKinney, your understanding is correct. It's also my understanding that these two communities that are seeking these new simulcasting facilities have requested them.

And the Department of Special Revenue has suggested that the request is one that should be moved forward by the Legislature. And as you know, the House Amendment A also has language that the Gaming Policy Board, as well as the local towns, have to approve them before they can actually move forward.

SENATOR MCKINNEY:

Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Senator McKinney.

SENATOR MCKINNEY:

And through you, Mr. President, the two towns who are requesting this, I believe one is Milford, I don't have it before me and I've forgotten the second town, Putnam, Connecticut, lovely place, Putnam, Connecticut.

Through you, Mr. President, are Milford and Putnam currently within the 18 towns that have OTB facilities but do not have simulcast? Through you,

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Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Stillman.

SENATOR STILLMAN:

Thank you. Through you, Mr. President, that is my understanding.

THE CHAIR:

Senator McKinney.

SENATOR MCKINNEY:

And through you, Mr. President, is there anything in the bill before us that would provide for or allow the expansion of simulcast facilities beyond the 12?

Also a second question, is there anything in the bill before us that would allow for an expansion of off-track betting facilities beyond the current number of 18? Through you, Mr. President

THE CHAIR:

Senator Stillman.

SENATOR STILLMAN:

Through you, Mr. President to Senator McKinney, it's my understanding that right now the request is for 12. As you know the law that -- the statute itself says that there can be no more than 18 in the state. I do not know, I have not had any

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conversations with anyone about adding beyond the 12 at the current time, but quite frankly, I wouldn't be surprised if next session they came back and asked for more because someone else, some other community has suggested they would like to have a facility, and the vendor would come to us and ask for help in that regard.

THE CHAIR:

Senator McKinney.

SENATOR MCKINNEY:

Again, thank you. And through you, Mr. President, am I correct then in understanding that if we were to expand beyond the current 18 OTB facilities in the state of Connecticut, it would necessarily have to be done through an act of this Legislature? Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Stillman.

SENATOR STILLMAN:

Thank you, sir, through you, that is the way I interpret the statute, sir.

THE CHAIR:

Senator McKinney.

SENATOR MCKINNEY:

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I thank the good Senator, and also through you, Mr. President, I should have asked the same question with respect to what would now be, should this pass and become law, a 12 simulcast facilities, again, any attempt to have a thirteenth simulcast of the existing six that don't have it, would also have to similarly be through legislative initiative, through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Stillman.

SENATOR STILLMAN:

Thank you, sir. Through you to Senator McKinney, it's my understanding, as has been past practice, that to go -- even though the state has authorized a maximum of 18, each time we add one, it has to come back to the Legislature for approval, sir.

THE CHAIR:

Senator McKinney.

SENATOR MCKINNEY:

Thank you, Mr. President.

I want to thank my friend and the good chairwoman of the Public Safety Committee for answering my questions.

Mr. President, I'm going to rise in opposition to

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the legislation before us. And I think, Senator Stillman, I understand certainly that this is a legislative approval. The Legislature has the ability to expand OTB facilities. They have the ability to expand the simulcast.

I rise in opposition in part because as one who had a number of conversations with advocates and people on all sides of the issue regarding the transfer simulcast from one facility to the Torrington facility, there were statements indeed, promises made that there would not be an attempt to come back and increase the number of simulcast facilities. And we are here less than two years later with an attempt to do that. And the increase of simulcast from 10 to 12 is not as great a fear, in my belief, than the next attempt, which may be to increase the 18 to perhaps 22 or more. I think that would be a bigger concern for me.

So while I understand that there are two communities who have OTB facilities who seek or may seek through their legislative bodies to also add simulcast to those facilities, I'm in part, at least making a statement that those of us who work here, who vote on bills, who think that you've reached an

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agreement and that agreement means something, only to find out that next session later, those who are party to the agreement come and say, well, that was last year's agreement, now we want more, I think I want to just send a message that that's not the way I like doing business. But also in part because I think we can't make it too easy to expand the number of OTB facilities through out the State of Connecticut.

So with that reservation, I do respect the bill before us and the chairwoman of the committee, but I'm going to vote no. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, sir.

Will you remark further the House Bill 6358?

Will you remark further?

Senator Stillman.

SENATOR STILLMAN:

Yes, thank you, Mr. President, and I won't ask that question that everyone asks because I know there's some opposition to this bill. But I did want to respond to some of the comments that were made, and I will keep it brief.

I share Senator McKinney's concerns. I find it rather ironic as someone who's worked for years on

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compulsive gambling problems and the issues around that, that I happen to be the chair of the Public Safety and Security Committee that oversees gambling in this state. So I certainly view my role with a little different eye than maybe some other folks.

But the reality is that this suggestion was made to the committee. It is certainly within the letter of the law, and I will support the bill. The reality is that as much as we don't like to see, or many of us don't like to see the expansion of gambling, it is certainly all around us, everywhere, but that doesn't mean that the state shouldn't manage itself in a responsible way. Thank you, sir.

THE CHAIR:

Will you remark further on the bill?

If not, Mr. Clerk, please call for a roll call vote. The machine will be open.

THE CLERK:

Immediate roll has been ordered in the Senate.
Will all Senators please return to the chamber.

Immediate roll has been ordered in the Senate.

Will all Senators please return to the chamber.

THE CHAIR:

Have all Senators voted? If all Senators have

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voted, please check the machine. The machine will be locked. The Clerk will call the tally.

THE CLERK:

Motion is on passage of House Bill 6358 in concurrence with the action in the House:

Total Number Voting	36
Necessary for Adoption	19
Those voting Yea	26
Those voting Nay	10
Those absent and not voting	0

THE CHAIR:

The bill passes in concurrence with the House.

Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Mr. President.

Would like to return to a bill, marked pass temporarily earlier, and, Mr. President, that is on Calendar page 29, Calendar 330, Senate Bill 954.

If the Clerk might call that item, mark it go and if the Clerk might call that next.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk

THE CLERK:

Calendar page 29, Calendar Number 330, File

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DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Thank you, Representative Clemons.

Representative Olson, do you have an announcement regarding the consent calendar, madam? Thank you. Now we'll turn to the call of the calendar. Will the Clerk please call Calendar 370.

THE CLERK:

On page 12, Calendar 370, House Bill Number 6358, AN ACT CONCERNING ADDITIONAL OFF-TRACK BETTING BRANCH FACILITIES, favorable report of the Committee on Planning and Development.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Dargan of the 115th, you have the floor sir.

REP. DARGAN (115th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move acceptance of the committee's favorable report and passage of the bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

The question before the chamber's acceptance of the joint committee's favorable report and passage of the bill. Please proceed, sir.

REP. DARGAN (115th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the current law, Department of Special Revenue has 18 currently

authorized licenses to operate OTB facilities. This just allows the city of Milford and Putnam to do that. And I move for its adoption.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Further on the bill? Further on the bill? Representative Davis of the 117th, you have the floor, sir.

REP. DAVIS (117th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Clerk is in possession of an amendment, LCO Number 6453. I ask that he please call the amendment and I be permitted to summarize.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Would the Clerk please call LCO 6453, which shall be designated House Amendment Schedule A.

THE CLERK:

LCO Number 6453, House A offered by Representative Davis and Senator Slossberg.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

The good Representative seeks leave of the chamber for summarization. Do I hear objection? If not, Representative Davis, please proceed, sir.

REP. DAVIS (117th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this

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amendment clarifies a practice of the Gaming Policy Board that requires them to get approval of the local legislative body before adding simulcasting to an existing OTB facility. I move adoption.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Question is on adoption. Will you remark further?

REP. DAVIS (117th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Currently, the local legislative body must approve the establishment of a new OTB facility while the Gaming Policy Board normally comes back to the legislative body for approval, this is not clear in statute. The requirement to do so is corrected by this amendment. I urge adoption.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

The question before the House is adoption of House Amendment Schedule A. Representative Perillo of the 113th, you have the floor, sir.

REP. PERILLO (113th):

Mr. Speaker, thank you very much. A question to the proponent of the amendment, if I may, through you, sir.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Please proceed, sir.

REP. PERILLO (113th):

Thank you, sir. I understand this has to do specifically with legislative authority. My question very simply, through the Speaker, is does this have any impact on zoning authority in the local autonomy of zoning regulations and zoning boards, et cetera? Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Davis.

REP. DAVIS (117th):

Mr. Speaker, I believe it does not. It simply allows the local legislative body to make the decision as to whether or not they wish to have the simulcasting added to a OTB facility. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Perillo.

REP. PERILLO (113th):

I thank the gentleman for his answer.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Thank you, sir.

Further on House A? Further on House A? If not, I'll try your minds. All those in favor, please

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signify by saying, aye.

REPRESENTATIVES:

Aye.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Opposed.

The ayes have it. Amendment is adopted. Further on the bill as amended? Further at the bill as amended by House A? If not, staff and guest, retire to the well of the House. Members take your seats. The machine will be open.

THE CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll call. Members to the chamber. The House is taking a roll call vote. Members to the chamber, please.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Have all members voted? If all members have voted the machine will be locked. If not -- the machine will be locked. Clerk, please take a tally. Will the Clerk please announce the tally.

THE CLERK:

House Bill 6358 as amended by House A.

Total Number Voting	146
Necessary for Passage	74
Those voting Yea	116

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Those voting Nay 30
Those absent and not voting 5.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Bill as amended is passed.

Will the Clerk please call Calendar 127.

THE CLERK:

On page 32, Calendar 127, substitute for House
Bill Number 5519, AN ACT CONCERNING WORKERS'
COMPENSATION PREMIUMS AND VOLUNTEER AMBULANCE
COMPANIES, favorable report by the Committee on
Planning and Development.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Ryan of the 139th, you have the
floor.

REP. RYAN (139th):

Yes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move for
acceptance of the joint committee's favorable report
and passage of the bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

The question before the chamber is acceptance of
the joint committee's favorable report and passage of
the bill. Please proceed, sir.

REP. RYAN (139th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Currently, workers

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BRENDA SISCO: Yes, that would probably be part of the 400 total.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Right, okay. Yes, if you could --

BRENDA SISCO: Sure.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Just so we can have some clear statistics, and which agencies they go with.

BRENDA SISCO: Sure, absolutely.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Thank you very much.

REP. DARGAN: Further questions? Hearing none, thank you very much, Commissioner.

That concludes the people that signed up underneath the legislators, agency heads and elected officials, so we'll go into the public and lobbyists. The first one is Don Barbero, representing Scientific Games or Sports Haven. Don is here to give us thoroughly double today, too.

DONALD BARBERINO: Senator Stillman, Representative Dargan and distinguished members of the public safety and security committee, my name is Don Barberino, and I represent Autotote Enterprises. I'd like to thank you for this opportunity to testify concerning House Bill Number 6358, An Act Concerning the Additional Off Track Betting Facilities, which would simply allow the simulcasting or display of video at Milford and Putnam.

Last year both legislative bodies in Milford and Putnam approved the location of an OTB in their communities. In order for this to

occur, the local legislative bodies hold public hearings and require other levels of approval, as well as the approval of the division of special revenue. Ultimately, the decision whether to allow an OTB branch or simulcast a facility rests with the local legislative body.

Simulcasting or the display of video enhances the experience of the racing fan by allowing them to watch the race. Currently racing fans will only be able to view the odds and hear the race calls at both of those locations. Members of the public can view live horse racing over cable TV and also over the Internet, as well as in some cases on their Blackberry devices. In fact, if you log in to ESPN.com and select horse racing, you can view streaming video of live horse racing from around the country.

In 2007 the legislature approved simulcasting or the display of video at the branches located in Norwalk, East Haven, Waterbury and Torrington. Given the numerous media outlets to watch live horse racing in today's society, it would be helpful if this committee and the legislature would consider authorizing the ability to simulcast in allowed facilities. Of course even with this authorization, the local legislative body would still have to provide approval. To my knowledge, Connecticut is the only state with legalized pari-mutuel wagering that does not allow the races to be televised in branches unless new legislation is enacted. So if we go to move into a new facility, we would have to come back and seek simulcasting approval.

I ask for your full support of House Bill Number 6358, and again, thank you for this

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opportunity and would be glad to answer any questions you may have.

REP. DARGAN: Thank you, Don.

Representative Sayers?

REP. SAYERS: Thank you. And in light of full disclosure, I want you to know Autotote is one of the ten top taxpayers in my town.

How many facilities are you allowed to open in the state.

DONALD BARBERINO: Eighteen. Currently we have 12.

REP. SAYERS: And so what kind of approval process do you have to go through when you open a new facility?

DONALD BARBERINO: In order for us to open a new facility, first generally we'll meet with the mayor, the economic development person, and then need to go before their planning and zoning board, then need to go before the local town council or board of aldermen and seek their approval, and should we win those votes, we would have the opportunity to open up a new branch. But then in order for us to have simulcasting, we would then have to come back to the legislature and -- and seek approval for simulcasting in those -- in those branches.

REP. SAYERS: I'm not really clear. You have approval for opening up to 18 facilities, but you still have to come back and get approval to open another facility?

DONALD BARBERINO: We have the opportunity to open up 18 facilities. We don't have 18. We have

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12 currently. But if we wanted to go ahead and move forward and open up a new OTB in a particular town, we would have to go through planning and zoning, through the town council, and they would have to support it and want it in their community. In order to get simulcasting from that point, we would then have to go before the legislature, like we are today, and seek approval to get simulcasting in those particular towns.

So I think the key is that in order for us to do anything, we just can't go and put an OTB wherever we want to. That's not the case. We need to get local legislative approval, and -- and as we all know working -- that takes time. But that's not -- that's not our intent. We're looking to get simulcasting approved so that in the event that opportunities arise in the future, we'd be able to just go through that approval process without having to come back to the legislature every year.

REP. SAYERS: Thank you.

REP. DARGAN: Representative Caruso.

REP. CARUSO: I'm not sure, does Bridgeport have an OTB?

DONALD BARBERINO: Shoreline Star.

REP. CARUSO: Okay. Do they have simulcasting?

DONALD BARBERINO: Yes.

REP. CARUSO: They do. And do the casinos have simulcasting?

DONALD BARBERINO: Yes.

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REP. CARUSO: Okay. Have you heard any opposition from the casinos about this or --

DONALD BARBERINO: No.

REP. CARUSO: No. Thank you.

REP. DARGAN: Representative Shapiro.

REP. SHAPIRO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for coming to testify today.

To follow up on Representative Sayers' question, do you currently have 12 facilities? You're authorized for 18, so there are six that you could have, but you haven't built out yet or you haven't found locations for, correct?

DONALD BARBERINO: Yes.

REP. SHAPIRO: Okay. And you're seeking the ability to simulcast at all 12 of the existing?

DONALD BARBERINO: We have simulcasting at ten of those locations. We're seeking simulcasting in Putnam and in Milford.

REP. SHAPIRO: Right, so that would be all 12.

DONALD BARBERINO: That would be 12, yes.

REP. SHAPIRO: Okay. So in the future if you wanted to fill out your full complement of 18 and the six additional, you would contemplate coming back here to ask for simulcasting there since it sounds like that's your business model. You're not going to open an OTB without it now, correct?

DONALD BARBERINO: We would like to -- well, we would like to have that opportunity to show the video should we have the opportunity to open up a new location.

REP. SHAPIRO: Okay. Do you have a model for growth and areas you're looking to expand into?

DONALD BARBERINO: You know, right now we're focused on opening Putnam. We won approval last year there, and the town is very excited about having a facility there. It's going to be in JD Coopers in a sports bar. They look at it as not only an opportunity to help a local businessman, but also a -- it will be a destination and people will come to the community to go to his facility, and I think they're looking at it in that respect.

As far as Milford, we're opening that on March 1st, and as we all know or many people may know, that was host of Milford Jai Alai for a number of years.

REP. SHAPIRO: Right. You are aware that there are some communities that are not looking favorably on the expansion of gambling --

DONALD BARBERINO: Right.

REP. SHAPIRO: -- within their towns?

DONALD BARBERINO: And we respect that, and we're not going to go willy-nilly or go about looking to open up branches everywhere. That's not our intent.

REP. SHAPIRO: Okay. Thank you very much. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

REP. DARGAN: Further questions?

Don, just a couple of questions. Maybe you could explain that before the two Native American casinos, there was zones of protection in Bridgeport and Milford and even in Plainfield.

DONALD BARBERINO: Right, and that's where this all comes out of, this -- the inability to show simulcasting to show the races. It comes out of those zones of protection. So, for example, Shoreline Star, they operate live greyhound racing, and so they wanted to protect their marketplace, and that meant that we could not show video in Norwalk and Waterbury. Same up in -- with Milford Jai Alai, that was also a zone of protection surrounding that facility. But now those businesses have gone away, unfortunately. We no longer have the three Jai Alai frontons, and we're not running live greyhound racing anymore. So that's where the -- that's where this legislation comes from. It comes from when there were the live events, and it was there to protect those live venues.

REP. DARGAN: Yes, two Native American race books, one is simulcast through you and the other one, the Mashantucket, is simulcast through Las Vegas Disseminating Company. Is that still true?

DONALD BARBERINO: Yes, that's true.

REP. DARGAN: And my last question is that last year the State of New York had a competitive bid process with NYRA, better known as the New York Racing Association, and how has that impacted your business?

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DONALD BARBERINO: The relationship between the Mohegan Sun and NYRA?

REP. DARGAN: No, between Autotote or Scientific Games and NYRA.

DONALD BARBERINO: Well, we have a -- you know, we -- we work with the Mohegan Sun, and Mohegan Sun has an exclusive to show the New York racing tracks and Foxwoods does not have -- have that exclusive, and -- and, you know, New York is an important part of our product that we offer. You know, Connecticut -- fans here in Connecticut have grown up watching New York racing, so New York is an important part of what we offer, and it's important for the Mohegan Sun, and no question Foxwoods is impacted by not having the ability to show NYRA racing.

REP. DARGAN: Senator?

SENATOR STILLMAN: Thank you. Thank you for coming here to testify on this bill.

Can you tell me, because I didn't realize that this OTB facility in Putnam could be -- is already existing in a sports bar? I mean, I just -- I heard you say -- mention the sports bar, and I notice that there's testimony from them. I don't know whether they're here to testify. If they are, we'll hear it later. But do you have any facilities in sports bars now in Connecticut?

DONALD BARBERINO: Well, Bradley Teletheater and Sports Haven both have sports bars in them.

SENATOR STILLMAN: But they're not specifically -- but the sports bar is within a greater facility --

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DONALD BARBERINO: That's correct.

SENATOR STILLMAN: -- correct?

DONALD BARBERINO: That's correct.

SENATOR STILLMAN: So we're not looking at a -- so
it's not a standalone sports bar that has OTB
in it now or simulcasting?

DONALD BARBERINO: Not of now.

SENATOR STILLMAN: So this would be the first. On
the -- on the other OTB facilities that have
sports bars in them, have you ever done a
study on the correlation between the amount of
alcohol that's consumed and the amount of bets
that are wagered?

DONALD BARBERINO: We don't have a -- we don't have
a formal study.

SENATOR STILLMAN: That means I'll ask if you have
an informal study.

DONALD BARBERINO: Do not.

SENATOR STILLMAN: That -- go ahead.

DONALD BARBERINO: You know, we're introducing
this -- we're introducing this into the sports
bar. The idea is to create more -- more
pleasurable places, more fun places to go to.
You know, many of our locations are -- are
storefront locations, and we're just trying to
create a nicer environment, and that's --
that's all we're trying to do, just create a
nicer place to go.

SENATOR STILLMAN: The fact that you have an

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opportunity to have 18 in the next whenever you're ready to open them, according to the law the state has already permitted, so to speak, 18 locations, and this would bring you up to 12, have you been approached by any other sports bars elsewhere in the state? Could this be an opportunity that other sports bars could come knocking on your door and saying, If we can open an OTB in our place, that would help our business; are you interested?

DONALD BARBERINO: We have not been approached by any other businesses at this time.

SENATOR STILLMAN: So this being the first, it could be an opportunity for -- for more of them in -- in sports bars?

DONALD BARBERINO: Potentially.

SENATOR STILLMAN: It does concern me somewhat. I mean, I'm not -- not that naive. I know that the other facilities have, you know, a bar as part of -- some of them do as a part of them, but I, quite frankly, didn't realize that this was going to be simulcasting within an existing sports bar, so --

DONALD BARBERINO: You know, the people of the town of Putnam had a town committee hearing and, you know, they unanimously were in favor of it, and it's also an opportunity to help a local businessman. You know, the hospitality industry is struggling right now. His business is down considerably. You know, he looks at it as a marketing opportunity to bring new people into his restaurant, and that's all. I mean, you know, it's just an opportunity just for a -- you know, to bring -- bring new people in and generate more

business for his restaurant.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Thank you. I under -- I understand that. I'm just concerned there now could be a -- you know, an increased number of them within those facilities, and --

DONALD BARBERINO: Well, again, you need to -- but, again, we're not going to be able to or our intent is not to go out and -- you need local -- you need local town council approval, so if the local town is not interested in having this, then they'll -- they won't vote for it.

SENATOR STILLMAN: So when Putnam expressed an interest in moving forward with this, they knew it was going to be in a sports bar?

DONALD BARBERINO: Yes, it had to go through the zoning.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Okay. They did not realize it might be a storefront somewhere and --

DONALD BARBERINO: No.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Okay.

DONALD BARBERINO: The town came out unanimously and supported it. They support Dave Landry, who has owned JD Coopers for 20 years. They're excited about having it. They look at it as a destination, look at it as keeping a business, a popular restaurant going, making -- continuing as a viable entity, you know, bringing more people into their downtown -- not downtown but bringing people into town. So they're excited about it.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Well, I mean, I'm pleased to

know that they are excited about it. Again, I do have that measure of concern about a sports bar being the site --

DONALD BARBERINO: Yeah, the --

SENATOR STILLMAN: Well, I guess someone could say, Well, it could be next door, too, but I do wonder if this will start an increased number of requests of your company to then approach a town.

DONALD BARBERINO: Remember, they have to abide by all of the liquor --

SENATOR STILLMAN: I know.

DONALD BARBERINO: -- laws, so they're not going to do anything that's -- you know, goes against that, so they are regulated in that respect. They do need to get a liquor license, and they are governed by that, so -- so --

SENATOR STILLMAN: Thank you.

REP. DARGAN: Further questions?

Don, I guess this would be a fair assessment, that there's probably over 250 sports bars in the state already that offer this because through our laws within our state, that first you could telephone wager through your company and through cable access through TVG, which is one of the horse racing live feeds that people already do that already within all these other facilities. I mean, I've been in plenty of bars where, whether it's not even the Kentucky Derby or the Preakness or one of the, you know, the fall Breeder Cup states that they offer this on a weekly, weekend basis. So, I mean, I would assume that that's already --

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you know, a lot of sports bars are already offering this to people that are -- that are horse people.

DONALD BARBERINO: Yes, there's no question, TVG is available on your home cable system. People in bars, you know, walk into different places and people have TVG on. I mean, people can watch the races anywhere nowadays. And that's all we're asking for, is just the opportunity to show the races, to show the races where people can watch them on their computer, on their Blackberry, on cable television. It's already readily available. So we're just asking for that opportunity to, when and if we do establish a place, to just have that right in Putnam and Milford to let them watch the races. It's nothing -- it's really nothing more than that. And, you know, as we've said, we do operate sports bars at Bradley Teletheater and Sports Haven, and it's really just a -- it's just a -- it's just another opportunity, you know, fun activity.

REP. DARGAN: Thank you. Further questions?

Hearing none, thank you very much.

The next speaker is Paul Costello.

PAUL COSTELLO: Good morning. Good morning Senators Stillman, Guglielmo, Representatives Dargan and Perillo, members of the public safety and security committee, my name is Paul Costello. I am with the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 90, National Electrical Contractors Association representing the state of Connecticut. I'm also a licensed electrical contractor in the state of Connecticut and have been involved in the industry for over 25 years. I'm a member

SB 788



TOWN OF PUTNAM

TOWN HALL
126 CHURCH STREET
PUTNAM, CONNECTICUT 06260



February 9, 2009

Dear Senator Stillman, Representative Dargan and members of the Public Safety and Security Committee:

As Mayor and with the unanimous backing of the Board of Selectmen, we support Raised Bill 6358, which would authorize the presentation of racing video in JD Coopers, a restaurant and sports bar on 146 Park Road. The video presentation will certainly enhance the experience of patrons who will be attending the facility.

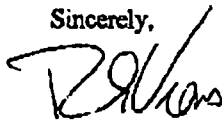
We feel that with the addition of an OTB at JD Coopers, it will become a destination that will attract new people to the area, not only visiting the restaurant but also other local businesses. It will also be an important shot in the arm to a popular restaurant which, like many businesses in the hospitality industry, is facing difficult times. In addition, it means new tax revenues for the town.

The new branch is an important part of the economic development of our community. I might add that at a special town meeting, it was unanimously voted in favor of an off track betting facility in JD Coopers. Dave Landry, the owner, is a great member of our community and this legislation will help his business grow.

We urge this committee and the state legislature to approve Raised Bill 6358.

Thank you for your time and consideration of my testimony.

Sincerely,


Robert G. Viens
Mayor

Town of Putnam is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer

Mayor's Office 963-6800	Economic Development 963-6834	Planning Commission 963-6803	Town Clerk 963-6807
Animal Control 963-6804	Fire Marshall 963-6805	Public Works 963 6813	Town Hall Fax 963-6814
Assessor 963-6802	Inland-Wetlands 963-6803	Revenue Collector 963-6806	Treasurer 963-6809
Building/Zoning 963-6803	Parks & Recreation 963-6811	Refuse & Recycling 963-6818	ZBA Commission 963-6803



SAMUEL S. BERGAMI, JR.
President

February 10, 2009

Mr. Samuel S. Bergami, Jr.
Alinabal, Inc.
28 Woodmont Road, Milford, CT 06460
203 877-3241
Testimony in Support of Raised Bill No. 6358

Dear Senator Stillman, Representative Dargan and members of the Committee,

As the property owner of the new Milford OTB branch and a local businessman in Milford, I urge the passage of Raised Bill 6358, which would allow simulcasting at the Milford and Putnam OTB branches.

Last year, the Milford Board of Alderman approved the new OTB location. When the branch officially opens in March, racing fans will not be able to watch the live horse races, which will take away from their enjoyment.

Milford has a long and positive history with gaming as it was the host of Milford Jai-Alai, which was a great tourist destination and was an important source of revenue for the town. The new facility, while much smaller will be a great place for people to meet and socialize with friends.

Simulcasting is important to the long term success of the Milford OTB and I urge this committee and the legislature to approve Raised Bill No. 6358.

Thank you for your complete consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Samuel S. Bergami Jr.", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mr. Samuel S. Bergami Jr.
CEO of Alinabal, Inc.
Milford, CT



Mr. David Landry, Owner
JD Coopers Restaurant, Putnam, CT
146 Park Road, 860- 928-0501
Testimony in Support of Raised Bill 6358 AAC Additional

OTB Facilities

February 10, 2009

Dear Senator Stillman, Representative Dargan and members of the Public Safety and Security Committee.

My name is David Landry and I am the owner of JD Coopers, a restaurant and sports bar located in Putnam. I have operated the restaurant for nineteen (19) years and it has become somewhat of an institution in the northeast corner of the state. I am excited about the opening of a branch in my sports bar and feel the relationship with Autotote will be beneficial for my business, my patrons as well as the local community.

Simulcasting is critical to its success. Needless to say when people go to a sports bar they expect to see the action whether it's a baseball game or a horse race. As someone new to all this, it is rather surprising that viewing a live horse race requires legislation in Connecticut.

As we are all aware, we are in a difficult economic period and restaurants are being hit particularly hard. This is an opportunity for me to incorporate a new business into my restaurant in an effort to attract new customers who might not normally visit my establishment. There will be a number of great marketing opportunities that will hopefully revitalize my business. I am excited about this opportunity.

I am not a horse racing fan, but I have friends who like going to the races and they assured me that this will be a great addition to my business. Quite frankly, this is critical to the long term success of JD Coopers. Without it, I'm not sure what the future will hold.

I urge this committee and the state legislature approve Raised Bill 6358

Thank you for your time and consideration of my testimony,


David Landry
Owner - JD Coopers

AUTOTOTE

Testimony

Statement of Don Barberino, Director of Marketing of Autotote Enterprises, Inc. in Favor of Raised Bill No. 6358 – An Act Concerning Additional Off Track Betting Facilities.

February 10, 2009

Senator Stillman, Representative Dargan and distinguished members of the Public Safety and Security Committee, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today in support of Raised Bill No. 6358, An Act Concerning the Additional Off Track Betting Facilities, which simply allows the simulcasting or display of video at the Milford and Putnam branches.

Last year, both local legislative bodies in Milford and Putnam approved the location of an OTB in their communities. In order for this to occur, the local legislative body holds public hearings and requires other levels of approval as well as that of the Division of Special Revenue. Ultimately, the decision whether to allow an OTB branch or simulcasting facility rests with the local legislative body.

Simulcasting or the display of video enhances the experience of the racing fan by allowing them to watch the race. Currently, racing fans will only be able to view the odds and hear the race call. Members of the public can view live horse racing over cable TV and also over the internet and even on their blackberry devices. Indeed, if you log on to ESPN.com and select horse racing, you can view streaming video of live horse races around the country.

In 2007, the legislature approved simulcasting or the display of video at the branches located in Norwalk, East Haven, Waterbury and Torrington. Given the numerous media outlets to watch live horse racing in today's society, it would be helpful if this committee and the legislature would consider authorizing the ability to simulcast in all allowed facilities. Of course, even with this authorization, the local legislative body still would have to provide approval.

To my knowledge, Connecticut is the only state with legalized pari-mutuel wagering, that does not allow the races to be televised in the branches unless new legislation is enacted.

I ask for your full support of Raised Bill No. 6358 and again thank you for the opportunity to speak here today. I would be happy to answer any questions the committee may have.