

Massachusetts House of Representatives Bill Summary

Bill #:	H.4238
Title:	An Act relative to fraternal organizations conducting bazaars
Sponsor:	Rep. Bruce J. Ayers
Committee:	Economic Development and Emerging Technologies
Hearing Date:	November 13, 2025
Reporting Deadline:	December 17, 2025 (Subject to extensions per House Rule 27)
Prior History:	N/A-New file
Key Terms:	<p>“Bazaar” - a place maintained by the sponsoring organization for disposal by means of chance of one or both of the following types of prizes: (1) merchandise, of any value, (2) cash awards, not to exceed \$250 each. (Chapter 271, Section 7A).</p> <p>“Local Licensing Authority” - means the clerk of the city or town wherein a permit to conduct Bazaars is issued or to whom an application to conduct same is submitted.</p> <p>“Raffle” - an arrangement for raising money by the sale of tickets, certain among which, as determined by chance after the sale, entitle the holders to prizes.</p>
Current Law:	<p><i>Chapter 271 of the MGL is titled “Crimes Against Public Policy.”</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Section 7A</i> of this chapter creates a limited exception to the Commonwealth’s general prohibition on gambling by allowing certain nonprofit organizations—such as veterans’, religious, fraternal, educational, civic, or recreational groups that have operated in Massachusetts for at least two years—to hold raffles and bazaars for fundraising purposes. Eligible organizations must obtain a permit from the local city or town clerk and ensure all proceeds are used for charitable purposes. The statute also sets procedural rules and restrictions, including a maximum of three bazaars per calendar year, no

more than one bazaar per day, and a limit of five consecutive hours per event.

Summary: This legislation amends Section 7A of Chapter 271 of the Massachusetts General Laws by removing the existing restriction that prohibits organizations with a permit from holding more than three bazaars in a single calendar year.