

My Champlain Valley (NY)

Albany Lawmakers Support Regulating Daily Fantasy Sports

The bill would require companies to pay a registration fee

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ALBANY, N.Y.

Millions of people play daily fantasy sports, but not in New York State, where online fantasy games have been ruled to be gambling. Some believe it's time New York legalize what they call a game of skill.

With roughly 3 million New Yorkers playing daily fantasy sports, Senator John Bonacic says it's time New York regulate the game.

Bonacic sponsors a bill requiring big companies, like DraftKings and FanDuel, to pay a \$500,000 registration fee and others five percent of their gross revenues. Companies with less than 5,000 customers wouldn't pay a registration fee.

The Assembly's Gaming Chair is proposing a \$5,000 registration fee over three years for small companies.

Assemblyman J. Gary Pretlow originally argued daily fantasy sports was gambling, but says he's okay as long as the gaming commission regulates the activity.

The opposition argues government has no place in legalizing what they call a dishonest business.

"Over the long term, gambling revenues worsen state budget problems, and that means you, the non-gambler, are paying higher taxes for less services for this gimmick," said Stop Predatory Gambling Executive Director Les Bernal. "And the only people that win in this game are the people who run the game."

We spoke with an attorney this morning who says even if these bills become law, he expects this issue to still be battled out in the courts. He argues daily fantasy sports would still be considered gambling without a change to the penal law. But the assembly sponsor isn't worried.

With the upcoming football season around the corner, without regulation these lawmakers say it would leave millions of angry New Yorkers.

The assembly's version of the bill still has to pass two committees before heading to the floor for a vote.

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