

Nelson wants to allow the state's racetrack casinos — Hollywood Casino at Charles Town Races, Mardi Gras Casino and Resort, Mountaineer Casino Racetrack and Resort, and Wheeling Island Hotel Casino Racetrack — to open smaller casinos.

Nelson's legislation would permit the casinos to open a secondary location if the property is within the larger casino's host county. Voters would have the final say, as a countywide local referendum would be held should county, and casino officials determine a satellite casino plan.

Nelson designed the legislation to revive struggling retail shopping centers that have lost many tenants in recent decades. COVID-19 only worsened commercial building occupancy rates in West Virginia.

"It's very similar to a bill that was introduced in the House in 2019 and introduced here last year," Nelson told his Senate colleagues before the vote yesterday.

#### Satellite Casinos Solution

Satellite casinos, sometimes called "mini-casinos," have been used in other states to revitalize malls and other vacant buildings, one notable being Pennsylvania.

Nelson introduced Senate Bill 62 in January. After passing the Senate Government Organization Committee, the satellite casino bill moved to the Senate floor, which easily passed with a 25-8 vote.

Nelson served in the House of Delegates — interchangeably called the General Assembly — from January 2013 until becoming a state Senator in December 2020.

#### History Repeats

Nelson's satellite casino bill during the West Virginia Legislature's 2022 session was numbered SB100. Coincidentally, Casino.org a year ago today wrote about the state Senate passing Nelson's mini-casino statute.

Last year's bill garnered less support, with only 23 state Senators backing the idea of more casinos. Republicans, who have long controlled the chamber, picked up a seat during last November's election.

The GOP holds 31 of the Senate's 34 seats, with eight of those Republicans inaugurated in January. Of the new Senate members, seven of the eight voted in favor of SB62. Sen. Vince Deeds (R-Fayette) was the lone opponent of the new Republican class.

Deeds' district encompasses Greenbrier County, where the historic Greenbrier resort is located. The Greenbrier is home to West Virginia's fifth and only other commercial casino. But since the Casino Club at The Greenbrier isn't at a racetrack, the luxury resort wouldn't qualify to consider a satellite gaming location. [안전 슬롯사이트](#)

## House Odds

Nelson's casino expansion statute now heads to the General Assembly for continued consideration. SB62 hasn't yet been assigned to a committee in the lower chamber.

Last year, Nelson's mini-casino bill stalled after being directed to the Assembly's Judiciary Committee. After that committee didn't act on the measure, the bill was moved to the Assembly Finance Committee. That committee also failed to vote on the statute. The West Virginia Legislature adjourned on March 12 without further action on SB100.

The Judiciary Committee remains chaired by Del. Moore Capito (R-Kanawha), but the Finance Committee has a new leader in Del. Vernon Criss (R-Wood). Criss replaced Assembly Majority Leader Eric Householder (R-Berkley) in December.

The West Virginia Legislature's 2023 session runs through March 11.