

104TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

State of Illinois

2025 and 2026

HB2969

Introduced 2/6/2025, by Rep. Bob Morgan

SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

New Act

Creates the Balanced Earnings And Record Standards (BEARS) and Stadium Oversight and Expectations Act. Sets forth the purpose of the Act. Defines terms. Provides that, to be eligible for public financing, a professional sports team must have achieved a 0.500 record in at least 3 out of the last 5 regular seasons. Provides that the eligibility requirement applies to all requests for public financing related to: (1) stadium construction; (2) stadium renovation; and (3) stadium maintenance. Provides that teams that have been in existence for fewer than 5 years are exempt from the eligibility requirement but must demonstrate competitive performance by achieving a 0.500 or above record in at least 2 out of the team's first 5 seasons before applying for additional public financing. Provides that the Illinois Sports Facilities Authority shall issue a public report confirming the team's eligibility before any consideration of public financing by the State or a unit of local government. Provides that, prior to any public hearing on a proposal for public financing, the Illinois Sports Facilities Authority shall publish a report detailing: (1) the team's performance record over the last 5 seasons; (2) the total amount of public financing requested; and (3) the projected economic impact of the proposed financing on the local community. Requires the report to be made publicly available on the Illinois Sports Facilities Authority website at least 30 days prior to the public hearing. Provides that any team found to have intentionally misrepresented its performance record or eligibility criteria shall be subject to: (1) a fine of up to \$500,000; and (2) a ban on applying for public financing for a period of 5 years. Allows the Attorney General to pursue legal action to enforce the penalties. Includes a severability clause. Effective immediately.

LRB104 10665 HLH 20744 b

1 AN ACT concerning government.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the
5 Balanced Earnings And Record Standards (BEARS) and Stadium
6 Oversight and Expectations Act.

7 Section 5. Purpose. The purpose of this Act is to ensure
8 that public financing for professional sports stadiums is
9 contingent upon the team's on-field performance. By tying
10 eligibility to demonstrated competitive success, this Act aims
11 to promote accountability, protect taxpayer dollars, and
12 encourage professional sports teams to invest in long-term
13 performance.

14 Section 10. Definitions. As used in this Act:

15 "Professional sports team" means any organization
16 participating in a professional sports league that seeks
17 public financing for stadium construction, renovation, or
18 maintenance.

19 "Public financing" refers to any direct or indirect
20 financial assistance provided by the State or a unit of local
21 government, including grants, loans, tax incentives, or bond
22 issuance.

1 "0.500 record" means a winning percentage of 0.500 or
2 greater during a regular season, calculated by dividing the
3 total number of wins by the total number of games played.

4 Section 15. Eligibility requirement for public financing

5 (a) To be eligible for public financing, a professional
6 sports team must have achieved a 0.500 record in at least 3 out
7 of the last 5 regular seasons.

8 (b) The eligibility requirement applies to all requests
9 for public financing related to:

10 (1) stadium construction;

11 (2) stadium renovation; and

12 (3) stadium maintenance.

13 (c) Teams that have been in existence for fewer than 5
14 years are exempt from the requirement in subsection (a) but
15 must demonstrate competitive performance by achieving a 0.500
16 or above record in at least 2 out of the team's first 5 seasons
17 before applying for additional public financing.

18 Section 20. Verification process

19 (a) The Illinois Sports Facilities Authority, in
20 consultation with the relevant sports league, shall verify the
21 team's performance history for the past 5 seasons.

22 (b) The Illinois Sports Facilities Authority shall issue a
23 public report confirming the team's eligibility before any
24 consideration of public financing by the State or a unit of

1 local government.

2 Section 25. Public reporting requirement

3 (a) Prior to any public hearing on a proposal for public
4 financing, the Illinois Sports Facilities Authority shall
5 publish a report detailing:

6 (1) the team's performance record over the last 5
7 seasons;

8 (2) the total amount of public financing requested;
9 and

10 (3) the projected economic impact of the proposed
11 financing on the local community.

12 (b) The report shall be made publicly available on the
13 Illinois Sports Facilities Authority website at least 30 days
14 prior to the public hearing.

15 Section 30. Penalties for misrepresentation

16 (a) Any team found to have intentionally misrepresented
17 its performance record or eligibility criteria shall be
18 subject to:

19 (1) a fine of up to \$500,000; and

20 (2) a ban on applying for public financing for a
21 period of 5 years.

22 (b) The Attorney General may pursue legal action to
23 enforce penalties under this Section.

1 Section 35. Severability. The provisions of this Act are
2 severable under Section 1.31 of the Statute on Statutes.

3 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon
4 becoming law.