



Nature leads ‘chaos gardening’ online trend

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‘Resolving this issue is critical’



“Being a nonprofit, we use (skill games) money to pay the bills, but we also use it to help people,” said Becky Sholly, assistant manager for American Legion Post 834 in Fallsington. JD MULLANE/BUCKS COUNTY COURIER TIMES

PA lawmakers risk court-ordered skill games shutdown

Mark Walters
USA TODAY NETWORK

Skill games regulation in Pennsylvania remains elusive as legislators face missing their deadline to create guidelines for the gambling machines that operate like slots but have no oversight. A Pennsylvania Supreme Court order in June gave the Legislature until Oct. 13 to pass a law surrounding the unregulated machines popular in social clubs, bars, restaurants and gas stations. Without one, the machines would become illegal since they would be considered slot machines, which are only permitted in the state’s 17 regulated casinos.

Are Pa. legislators making skill games proposals?

A memo circulated by Republican Sen. Gene Yaw from the state’s Northern Tier and Democratic Sen. Anthony Williams from Philadelphia suggests a \$500 monthly fee per skill game terminal. The plan unveiled Sept. 30 projects approximately \$700 million in annual statewide revenue. That same day, a companion bill in the House was presented with bipartisan support. There are believed to be at least 70,000 skill games operating across the state, but only 24,856 slot machines operating in state-regulated casinos, according to figures from the attorney general’s office and the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board.



Jeff Millay, chief operations officer at Miele Manufacturing, speaks to small business owners about proposed legislation to regulate skill games in Pennsylvania on July 23 at Break Away Sports Lounge in Waynesboro. AMBER SOUTH/PUBLIC OPINION

At least two proposals — one each in the House and Senate — seek a six-month extension to give legislators more than the court-ordered four-months that is nearly expired. Republican state Rep. Russ Diamond, of Lebanon County, put out a plan to reduce the tax rate for casino slot machines from 52% to 49.9% and tax skill games at the same rate.

Are legislators close to a solution?

Discussions are happening, legislators in both the state House and Senate

confirmed. “We’re all waiting,” Democratic state Rep. Scott Conklin from Centre County told USA TODAY Network Pennsylvania. But talks are just talks. Republican state Rep. Mike Jones, from York County, said he is hopeful there may be something coming next week. “I think it’s ridiculous we haven’t prioritized this and figured out a way for people to keep the machines,” Jones said. With bipartisan proposals aplenty,

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One year on, Trump’s Gaza plan stalled

Deal hasn’t halted Israeli fire or disarmed Hamas

REUTERS

JERUSALEM — President Donald Trump’s year-old plan to end the Gaza war has stalled, with Israel mounting near-daily attacks and occupying around two-thirds of the shattered enclave where Palestinians face dire conditions. The initial phase resulted in a ceasefire on Oct. 10, 2025, and secured the release of the last remaining hostages seized in Hamas’ 2023 attacks on Israel, along with freedom for hundreds of Palestinian prisoners and detainees held by Israel. But other goals, including disarming Hamas, securing Israeli withdrawal and rebuilding Gaza, appear far from reach.

What was in the plan?

The first phase of Trump’s 20-point plan included a suspension of all military operations, Israeli withdrawal from part of the enclave, hostage and prisoner releases and a surge in aid. Later phases foresaw Hamas disarming and new governance by a Palestinian body overseen by the Trump-led Board of Peace. Israel would gradually withdraw, handing territory to a temporary International Stabilization Force, or ISF.

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