MONTGOMERY, Ala. (AP) — State senators are expected to debate lottery and casino legislation Tuesday as lawmakers make a third attempt to advance a gambling bill this session.

Republican Sen. Jim McClendon of Springville said Monday that he expects to bring up a bill for debate that would establish a state lottery as well as allow nine casino sites. The debate comes days after lottery legislation stalled in the Senate and weeks after a casino and lottery bill failed by two votes. But McClendon says he believes he has the 21 required votes to get the measure through the Senate and on to its next test in the House of Representatives.

“I think this bill will pass. That’s the bottom line,” McClendon said in a telephone interview.

McClendon last week delayed a vote on his lottery bill, which did not include casinos, because he said he could not break an expected filibuster. He plans to propose a substitute that will include casinos.

A circulated draft of the proposed substitute would establish a state lottery and allow casino and sports betting sites in Jefferson County, Mobile County, Macon County, Greene County, Houston County and either Jackson or DeKalb counties as well at the three sites owned by Poarch Band of Creek Indians.

Most of the sites are locations of dog tracks and current electronic bingo operations, but those businesses are not guaranteed the casino licenses. The licenses will be put up for bid, but the existing operators will be given the opportunity to make a final bid exceeding the highest bidder to win the license in their respective county.

The Poarch Creeks will have that right for the final bid for the north Alabama site in either Jackson or DeKalb counties.

Dog tracks and businesses operating electronic bingo machines have long fought to be included in any casino legislation. “The most contentious issues is what happens to current operators.

How do they stay in business?" McClendon said.

Alabama is one of five states without a state lottery. Alabama voters in 1999 rejected then-Gov. Don Siegelman's proposed state lottery, but lawmakers in both parties say they believe voters are now more welcoming to the idea.

"I think the bill has the votes, but tomorrow will tell the tale," Republican Sen. Del Marsh of Anniston said.

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