



State of Connecticut
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STATE CAPITOL
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

REPRESENTATIVE PEGGY SAYERS
SIXTIETH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

300 CAPITOL AVE STE 4049
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106

CAPITOL: 860-240-8585
TOLL FREE: 1-800-842-8267
FAX: 860-240-0206
E-MAIL: Peggy.Sayers@cga.ct.gov

DEPUTY SPEAKER

MEMBER
HIGHER EDUCATION & EMPLOYMENT ADVANCEMENT
COMMITTEE
PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

TESTIMONY ON HB 5378

Thank you:

Senator Larson, Representative Dargan, and members of the Public Safety Committee. I am here today to speak in support of HB 5378 which looks to expand convenience gaming in the state.

Casino gaming is on the rise in Massachusetts, Rhode Island has built a casino, and now the video slot attraction at Aqueduct and Yonkers are syphoning Fairfield County funds to New York. Connecticut will not only lose funds to the other states, but will lose tax revenue to our towns. Most importantly we could lose jobs across the state, not only at the gaming facilities but the business that support them.

OFA and OLR project that state revenue from our two casinos would continue to drop over the next few years. They predicted those revenues would plateau in Fiscal Years 2017 and 2018 at \$212.2 million.

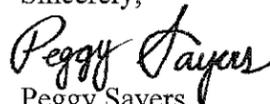
The Mashantucket Pequot and Mohegan Indian tribes would have to agree to the expansion, open the compact and would get a percentage of the profits. Right now, the feeling is that both tribes would entertain talks on the matter in order to prepare themselves against future competition.

Last year, a Gaming Slots Task Force issued a pair of Recommendations:

- 1) **Expand slots gaming licenses to three existing pari-mutuel enterprises;** the Shoreline Star in Bridgeport, Sports Haven in New Haven and the Tele-Theater in Windsor Locks.
- 2) **Establish a percentage of additional state slots gaming tax revenue to be allocated to** the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services to treat problem gamblers and mitigate potential negative externalities from video slots gaming.

In my town we have 1500 hotel rooms; people fly into Bradley for meetings and are frequently looking for evening entertainment. Just as the hotels now send the vans to Six Flags in MA, they would provide rides to the casino in Springfield once it is built (taking back roads and avoiding the tolls I might add). If we pass this bill, we could offer slot machines and pari-mutuel racing within walking distance, and keep jobs and money in Connecticut. We need to be proactive and look at this before the Springfield and Boston Casinos are built and we suffer the consequences.

Sincerely,


Peggy Sayers
State Representative