



Office of the Mayor

Testimony of Deb Hinchey  
Mayor, City of Norwich  
Before the Public Safety & Security Committee  
In Support of SB 1090, An Act Concerning Gaming

Debercy A. Hinchey

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Good afternoon, Senator Larson, Representative Dargan and distinguished members of the Public Safety and Security Committee. My name is Deb Hinchey and I am the Mayor of the City of Norwich. I am here today to testify in support of SB 1090, An Act Concerning Gaming.

The debate about gambling in our state was decided long ago when the compact was signed by the tribes and the state of Connecticut. Since that time, we have all shared in the success enjoyed by both the Mashantucket Pequots and The Mohegan Tribe. Many communities and organizations throughout the region have benefited from their generosity as well. The issue we face today is about competition from our neighbors who have witnessed the financial success of the tribes and the economic stability that success has provided the state through yearly slot revenues and job creation.

With the decline in defense jobs in Southeastern Connecticut, our region would have been devastated without the thousands of good-paying jobs created by the casinos. Not to mention the thousands of jobs provided through ancillary services, businesses and vendors connected to the Casino. Norwich alone has almost 3500 residents working at the Mohegan Sun and Foxwoods. This does not include all of the Norwich residents who are employed by vendors, restaurants, hotels, shops and other businesses outside of the Casinos whose jobs are directly tied to that business.

We are talking about thousands of taxpayers in Norwich alone who will likely be at risk unless we step up to the plate to protect their jobs. The legislation before you today does just that. By creating opportunities for individuals to easily patronize Connecticut's Casinos, we will continue to share in the success of these world-class destinations. Without this bill, we will surely lose business to the new operations outside of Connecticut, putting our constituents jobs at risk.

As elected officials, it is our responsibility to do everything we can to protect our citizens. Unfortunately, we cannot do anything about the new competition that is on the horizon, but we can do everything possible to ensure that we have a fighting chance. We should not gamble with the livelihoods of our residents who depend on the Casino operations in Connecticut.

I urge your passage of SB 1090. Thank you for your consideration.