



State Of Connecticut

SENATE
STATE CAPITOL
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY
Senators Martin M. Looney and Bob Duff
March 17, 2015

In support of:

Senate Bill 1090, An Act Concerning Gaming

Thank you Representative Dargan, Senator Larson and members of the Committee on Public Safety and Security for allowing us to submit testimony in support of Senate Bill 1090, An Act Concerning Gaming, which would allow the Mashantucket Pequot and Mohegan Tribes to jointly operate a new gaming facility in Connecticut.

Thousands of Connecticut jobs are being threatened by the impending opening of resort casinos near the Massachusetts and New York borders, which would significantly impact the existing casinos in Connecticut. According to a recent market study, Connecticut residents represent 29.2 percent of the prospective Massachusetts gaming market. The same study estimates the market share for the Springfield casino from Connecticut residents is between \$114 million and \$134 million per year.

Senate Bill 1090 represents a proactive move to protect jobs in Connecticut. The casinos are two of our state's major employers – Mohegan Sun employs workers from 139 Connecticut towns, and the casino spends \$249 million on 760 vendors located in 141 Connecticut towns. Foxwoods Casino's roughly 5,500 employees come from 134 Connecticut towns. Additionally, the casinos also drive much of the tourism and hospitality business in Southeastern Connecticut. We go to great lengths in Connecticut to protect and grow jobs in aerospace, defense, manufacturing, biotech and cable media. We must now do the same for tourism, entertainment and gaming.

Also, over the last 20 years, the bottom lines of cities and towns have benefitted greatly from Pequot grant payments, totaling roughly \$2 billion. Throughout our state, that funding has helped municipalities hold the line on property taxes, hire teachers, police officers and firefighters, and provide critical services. This legislation seeks to protect jobs - not only at our casinos, but in our cities and towns throughout Connecticut as well.

Make no mistake; Massachusetts and New York are going to fight for Connecticut's gaming dollars. If they win, it will be a body blow to Connecticut's gaming industry, and jobs and economic well-being not only in Eastern Connecticut but throughout our entire state. We believe Senate Bill 1090 is critical to Connecticut's economic future. We hope you will join us in supporting it. Thank you.