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DEPUTY SPEAKER

MEMBER

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TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

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First, thank you to Senator Larson, Representative Dargan, and members of the Public Safety and Security Committee for giving me the opportunity to testify on Raised Bill 1090.

Casino gaming is on the horizon in Massachusetts, Rhode Island has built a casino that has gaming, and the video slot attraction at Aqueduct and Yonkers is syphoning Fairfield County funds to New York. If we are not proactive about gaming in Connecticut, we will lose funds to these other states, tax revenue to our towns, and most importantly we will lose jobs across the state.

Last year, I co-chaired the Gaming Slots Task Force and we issued the following recommendations: To begin working with the Mashantucket Pequot and Mohegan Tribes, to expand slots gaming licenses to three existing pari-mutuel enterprises in CT, and to establish a percentage of gaming tax revenue to be allocated to the Dept. of Mental Health and Addiction Services to treat problem gambling.

In my town we have 1,500 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. We could offer slot machines and pari-mutuel racing within walking distance instead and keep jobs and money in Connecticut. This could be done very quickly as there are already existing facilities that are licensed.

This is an important discussion and I hope we can all come to the table to discuss the best options for CT. I am grateful to Speaker Sharkey, Senator Looney, Representative Dargan, and especially Senator Larson for taking the time to listen to me.

Sincerely

Peggy Sayers,
State Representative, 60th District