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The Town of Windsor Locks

Home of Bradley International Airport

March 16, 2015

Written Testimony of First Selectman Steven N. Wawruck, Jr., Town of Windsor Locks, CT
S.B. No. 1090 (RAISED), AN ACT CONCERNING GAMING

Senator Larson, Representative Dargan, and distinguished members of the Public Safety and Security Committee, my name is Steve Wawruck, First Selectman of The Town of Windsor Locks, home of the "Gateway to New England", also known as Bradley International Airport.

Our town has been working with the Airport Authority to make a better "gateway" for Bradley Airport, with more options for entertainment, hotels, and restaurants nearby, amenities that people expect when they travel near a major airport destination.

Part of our work has been the positive addition of Bobby V's restaurant location at the newly renovated Bradley OTB facility. It has added a centerpiece to the Bradley Airport Redevelopment Zone and is a convening place for many area businesses and residents.

S.B. No 1090 is an important first step to jump start the discussions on how to expand casino expansions at our Bradley OTB site.

The marketing plan developed by MGM for the Springfield, MA casino is to attract and pull as many tourists and guests from Connecticut. They have made no secret about this and will attempt to recapture those who currently travel to Connecticut's gaming entertainment venues. The competition from the new casinos in Massachusetts (especially Springfield) will have a profound negative impact on Windsor Locks as well as the State of Connecticut and its gaming industry, if the State stands by and takes no action at all. If the casinos partner with the Bradley OTB site, it will help protect the jobs and local tax revenue from my community but as well as state revenue and jobs across the state of Connecticut.

The Town of Windsor Locks has enjoyed an excellent relationship with Sportech Venues who owns and manages the OTB facility. They have been great corporate neighbors and an important and long term employer of over 100 people. Sportech contributes consistent tax revenue to the town. The company has made big investments in the Bobby V's restaurant and overall upgrades to the business.

We need to protect those jobs and investments that have been made in our community.

In closing, I would make myself available to serve in any capacity to begin serious discussions about protecting jobs and revenue in my local community as well as across the state of Connecticut from the very real and serious competition from Massachusetts.

Thank you for your time and consideration of my testimony on this very important matter.

Sincerely,

Steven N. Wawruck, Jr.
First Selectman