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INTERNATIONAL UNION, UNITED AUTOMOBILE, AEROSPACE & AGRICULTURAL IMPLEMENT WORKERS OF AMERICA-UAW

DENNIS WILLIAMS, President 65 GARY CASTEEL, Secretary-Treasurer

HB5577 AA Requiring the Evaluation of the Costs and Benefits of Establishing Certain Commercial Gaming within the State of Connecticut
OPPOSE
United Auto Workers Region 9A
Julie Kushner, Director

Good afternoon. I am Julie Kushner, Director of UAW Region 9A. We represent over 10,000 active and retired members in Connecticut - 1,400 of these members are dealers at Foxwoods Resort and Casino.

We oppose this bill because we do not believe another study needs to be done on this issue. Studies conducted last year show clearly and convincingly that building a third casino in Connecticut will stem the projected loss of jobs and revenue expected when MGM's Springfield casino is built.

The evidence and data studied and outlined last year show that, without action, Connecticut workers, their families, jobs and the economy overall will suffer.

To that end, both of Connecticut's Tribes have united to form a new corporate entity, MMCT, around a plan to keep and grow jobs and revenue in Connecticut.

MMCT is well into the process of identifying a site whose location will be best equipped to keep Connecticut's gaming consumers from leaving the state to gamble. This is not a precise science by any means, but has been studied extensively, and three sites have already been identified with plans pending to move this project forward.

Time is of the essence. MGM has already broken ground. If Connecticut is to move a plan forward to protect Connecticut jobs, the time to act is now. Another study will simply delay the entire process and spend taxpayer dollars to replicate efforts and evidence already in your hands. And, we might add, this General Assembly was convinced enough by these studies to pass the bill allow the two tribes to move forward and put into action a plan to save Connecticut jobs.

What we learned in the studies, you have all heard and seen from Clyde Barrows. A third casino will:

1. Help protect Connecticut jobs by recapturing 46% of the 9,300 jobs that will be lost and 80% of the gaming/non-gaming revenue if Connecticut does nothing in response to the MGM development;
2. Create up to 6,584 new jobs;
3. Generate $337 million in new revenue and $78 million in new taxes.

Connecticut's Tribes are committed to Connecticut and are willing to invest in the state and its workforce. Our members at Foxwoods have fought long and hard to secure better wages, benefits and working conditions with Foxwoods. Last year we negotiated strong project labor and neutrality agreements so the construction and operations jobs will be union.

Our members support the effort to build a third casino in Connecticut because they believe it will keep jobs and revenue in the State and because these jobs will be good union jobs. They have fought long and hard for better wages, benefits and working conditions and believe that the two Tribes through MMCT have made a commitment to their future gaming workforce and their right to collective bargaining.

Thank you for your consideration and please do not pass this bill and waste time studying an issue that has already been studied. Let's move forward to protect Connecticut jobs and revenue.

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