

Testimony of Roberta James-Brown
In support of
SB 957, An Act Concerning the Regulation of Gaming and the
Authorization of a Casino Gaming Facility in the State
Before the Public Safety Committee

March 9, 2017

Good Afternoon Senator Larson, Representative Verrengia and members of the Public Safety Committee. My name is Roberta James-Brown and I am a resident of Norwich. I am here today to speak in support of SB 957, An Act Concerning the Regulation of Gaming and the Authorization of a Casino Gaming Facility in the State.

I have worked at Foxwoods since 1998 and I am proud to be able to make that statement. How often do you hear today that someone has stayed with a company for over 19 years?

I started on the front line and worked my way up to the position I have today assisting employees and serving as an advocate for team members.

I find the negative comments in the press about "casino Jobs" both rude and insulting. All too often, folks who don't work in our industry and have no idea about our salaries and benefits imply that casino jobs are not "good jobs."

Frankly, with the decline in the defense industry, I don't know what Southeastern Connecticut would have done without the Casinos and the thousands of jobs they created.

A blow to our industry from a Massachusetts Casino would have a devastating effect on so many employees and their

families. As you think about the "Casino Jobs" that are regularly being discussed today, I want you to think about the husband and wife teams who work at both Casinos, or the single moms who are the only sources of income or people like me who have created a successful career that I am proud of. My husband and I have purchased a home, raised a family and are putting our daughter through college, in part because of the "casino job" that I have. Our jobs are real and they matter.

There would be a terrible domino effect if we fail to help the Casinos in their quest to remain competitive. The negative impact would be felt throughout the region as both small and large communities where these gainfully employed "Casino workers" live, work, shop and play.

I am committed to saving these jobs and I hope you are too. I urge you to pass SB 957. Thank you!