

Public Safety Committee Public Hearing

March 9, 2017

Testimony in Support of

SB 957 An Act Concerning the Regulation of Gaming and the Authorization of a Casino Gaming Facility in the State

Senator Larson, Senator Guglielmo, Representative Verrengia, Representative Sredzinski, and members of the Public Safety Committee,

My name is John Lurate and I am here today representing the IBEW Local 35 to speak in support of SB 957 and the proposal to build a third casino run by Connecticut's two federally recognized tribes, the Mashantucket Pequots and the Mohegans, in East Windsor, CT. The IBEW represents nearly 3,000 licensed electrical journeymen and apprentices in the State of Connecticut. We take pride in our training and apprenticeship programs and feel workplace safety and promoting an educated, highly skilled workforce is of utmost importance.

Our number one goal is putting our apprentices and journeymen to work on projects that we know will guarantee they earn a satisfying middle-class wage, allowing them to maintain a high quality of life and reinvest their earnings into Connecticut's communities. That is why I am here before you today, asking that you look no further than the men and women standing behind me to tell you how important it is to support and approve the construction of a casino in East Windsor. We need these jobs. The two tribes have guaranteed this project will have a PLA, which to us is like winning the lottery. It is becoming more of a struggle to find large construction projects which will guarantee a PLA, which in turn provides for those decent wages and benefits for our workers as I just mentioned. We are very thankful to the two tribes for their early commitment to a PLA. Additionally, both the Mashantucket Pequots and the Mohegans have proven their commitment to long standing relationships with their partners, as we were engaged in the initial construction of the casinos and have continued to benefit from their maintenance and expansion work in the 20 to 25 years since. We expect this ongoing partnership will continue, and we are eager to see the tribes continue their commitment to preserving jobs and revenue in the state of Connecticut.

Thank you for your consideration.