

NEW ENGLAND REGIONAL COUNCIL OF CARPENTERS

United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America

LOCAL UNION 326
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BRUCE LYDEM
PRESIDENT

**TESTIMONY OF ERNEST PAGAN, CARPENTER'S LOCAL 326,
BEFORE THE PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY COMMITTEE
REGARDING PROPOSED BILL 7055 and PROPOSED BILL SB 11
FEBRUARY 26, 2019**

Members of the Public Safety and Security Committee, my name is Ernest Pagan, and I am a proud member of Carpenter's Local 326, which represents nearly 4,000 union carpenters in Connecticut. We are affiliated with the New England Regional Council of Carpenters, which represents more than 30,000 union carpenters in Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine and now most of New York State. We have more than 2,500 signatory contractors who use our members.

I was born and raised in New Haven. I know the importance of a job, especially one that leads to a career. Jobs bring hope to the community!

The proposed casino project in Bridgeport will create more than 2,000 good paying construction jobs. MGM—if they are selected—has promised to provide a regional workforce development and training center in my hometown of New Haven. This means that not only would there be good paying union construction jobs for the length of the project, but there would be good job and training opportunities for New Haven and Bridgeport residents for many years to come.

As carpenters, we aren't experts in gaming policy. We are builders. And our union carpenters have been lucky enough to work on projects for MGM throughout the country and for the Mohegan and Pequot tribes here in Connecticut. Those jobs have provided good wages and benefits that help our members raise their families, educate their children, access our world-class training program and retire with dignity. These good-paying construction jobs are the backbone of the middle-class.

As you craft a gaming policy for Connecticut, we hope that you will support a policy that maximizes construction job opportunities, like the good jobs provided by MGM and the Mohegan and Pequot tribes over the years. Ideally, we would love to see casinos built in both Bridgeport and East Windsor.

At a time when states are providing tax incentives and benefits just to lure corporations, like Amazon, it is exciting to see potential new private investment in Connecticut from both MGM and the Mohegan and Pequot tribes in our state. So, please consider a gaming policy for our state that will maximize the number of good paying jobs for Connecticut residents.

Thank you for your time and your consideration.