



The Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport, Inc.

Leveraging Hope, Transforming Communities

*Service * Dialogue * Collaboration*

Dear Members of the Public Safety Committee:

I am the Rev. Cass L. Shaw, I live and work in Bridgeport, where I lead and represent The Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport, a non-profit agency made up of 66 congregations of many denominations. The Council of Churches has opposed casino expansion for decades, and I add my voice once again. I am also a member of the Coalition Against Casino Expansion in Connecticut (CACE). CACE is a group of 14 faith communities and organizations.

We strongly oppose H.B. 7055: An Act Creating the Connecticut Gambling Commission and Creating a Competitive Bidding Process for a Resort Casino. We are also opposed to S.B. 11 An Act Concerning the Authorization of a Casino Gaming Facility in East Windsor, S.B.17 An Act Authorizing Sports Wagering, Internet Gambling and Internet Keno and S.B. 665 An Act Concerning Sports Wagering.

My first pastorate was in Cape May, NJ, in the early 1980's. I saw first hand the rise and fall of Atlantic City, and dealt with the fall out, the human misery, prostitution, gambling addictions and more. I do not believe that continuing to build casinos, whether in East Windsor, Bridgeport, or anywhere else in Connecticut will create healthier communities. It is my experience that just the opposite will be the case.

I'm acutely aware of the state of Connecticut's economy and finances. I'm as eager to bring new jobs and tax revenue into the state, and especially into Bridgeport where The Council collaborates with a number of other agencies in supporting people in crisis, feeding the hungry, and striving to help people lift themselves out of poverty. However, casinos are not a viable way forward.

I urge you not to allow casino expansion in any form, and instead seek healthier, safer, and more sustainable job growth in Connecticut.

Sincerely,

Cass L. Shaw
President & CEO

**Advocacy * Food Access & Economic Development * Ecumenical & Interfaith
Re-Entry * Youth in Crisis**

1718 Capitol Avenue • Bridgeport, Connecticut 06604-1531
Tel: 203.334.1121 • Fax: 203.367.8113 • www.ccgb.org