

SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
5 Connecticut Avenue, Norwich, Connecticut 06360
(860) 889-2324/Fax: (860) 889-1222/Email: office@seccog.org

March 2, 2021

Re: 6451: An Act Concerning Gaming Agreements with the Mashantucket Pequot Tribe and the Mohegan Tribe of Indians of Connecticut

Senator Bradley, Representative Horn and distinguished members of the Public Safety and Security Committee, thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony on House Bill No. 6451, An Act Concerning Gaming Agreements with the Mashantucket Pequot Tribe and the Mohegan Tribe of Indians of Connecticut.

In April of 2020 The Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments advocated for allowing online gaming for our tribes. I have attached a copy of that letter for your reference. We had hoped this could be done through Executive Order as we knew the journey ahead for our casinos would be difficult with the pandemic. This did not happen as we had hoped. We believe the state should expand gaming agreements with the Mashantucket Pequot and Mohegan Tribes. An expansion in online gaming would include sports wagering: e-sports and fantasy, casino & keno within the state. This expansion would help these State and regional partners to reclaim revenue lost during the COVID-19 pandemic. Many businesses are already benefiting from this revenue stream in other States and Countries. We would like to keep this revenue stream kept here in Connecticut to benefit our residents. We continue to advocate for a fair and equitable formula that compensations those communities who are directly affected by the impacts of the local casinos.

Thank you for your consideration in supporting this bill,

Fred Allyn III
Mayor
Chairman Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments

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1 April 2020

Honorable Ned Lamont, Governor
State of Connecticut
Office of the Governor, State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Governor Lamont:

It is clear that we are in uncharted territory with this pandemic that our state and our nation are facing. Many millions of people and businesses are suffering and we do not know when this health crisis will end. In our region, two of our largest employers, Foxwoods and Mohegan Sun Casinos, have shut down to help reduce the spread of COVID-19. They have also donated their food and facilities to help the greater good.

The Foxwoods and Mohegan Sun Casinos have been strong community partners over the years. This public health emergency has altered their livelihood in an unprecedented way. We need to do everything we can to assure that they are able to survive now and thrive again in the future. This is why we, the Chief Elected Officials and Chief Executive Officers of the 22 municipal members of the Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments (SCCOG), are respectfully requesting that you issue an Executive Order to allow the two casinos to begin utilization of online gaming during this time that they have voluntarily closed their doors. As you are aware, online gaming was part of the bi-partisan proposed bill “An Act Concerning Jobs In and Revenue from the Gaming Industry”, which the SCCOG has previously supported.

This revenue source will help them to immediately offset the losses they are facing. It will help get people back to work more quickly when the pandemic ends. It will help assure that the many municipalities that depend on revenue from the Pequot Fund are able to continue to receive this much needed funding.

The Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments strongly urges that you grant the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation and Mohegan Tribe the ability to utilize online gaming immediately. Thank you for consideration of this request, and thank you for your strong leadership during this public health emergency.

Sincerely,

Mark Nickerson, SCCOG Chairman
East Lyme First Selectman

Cc: Chairman Rodney Butler, Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation
Chairman James Gessner, Jr., Mohegan Tribe

Member Municipalities:

Bozrah * Colchester * East Lyme * Franklin * Griswold * Borough of Jewett City * City of Groton * Town of Groton * Lebanon * Ledyard * Lisbon * Montville * New London * North Stonington * Norwich * Preston * Salem * Sprague * Stonington * Stonington Borough * Waterford * Windham

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SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

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