

SAY NO TO THE CASINO CIVIC ASSOCIATION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: May 8, 2023

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Casino Opponents Urge County Legislators to Vote NO! *Casinos bring wide-ranging negative impacts to suburban communities; We call on Nassau County legislators to stop the Sands NOW*

Garden City, NY – Members of the Say No to the Casino Civic Association urge our county legislators to vote NO on transferring the HUB land lease to the Sands. We implore our elected officials to reject the Sands Casino proposal and the expansive, pervasive negative impacts that accompany it, and support a development project at the HUB that will benefit our community instead.

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SAY NO TO THE CASINO CIVIC ASSOCIATION OPEN LETTER TO COUNTY LEGISLATORS

To our County Legislators (cc: Executive Blakeman),

We reach out to you today to express our grave concerns about the proposed Sands casino project and urge you to stop the proposal by voting NO on the lease transfer. Casinos tout union jobs and tax revenue, but there are real, quantifiable, and devastating consequences that casinos bring to suburban communities that must be factored in. We are confident that once you weigh these long-term negative impacts, you'll agree that voting against this proposal is the only reasonable choice.

On your approx \$3.8B county budget, you predict about \$50m/year in tax revenue from the Sands. That's about 1.3% of the entire budget - is a 1.3% increase worth it to you? A handful of accountants could easily identify areas of inefficiency in your budget that would save at least \$50m/year, if not more. Manage your budget better and you won't need a casino.

Supporters point out that this project will put unions to work. We support unions, we want them to build - we just don't want them to build a casino. While union members may indeed enjoy at least short-term steady employment from this project, we respectfully remind you that once they're done, we'll have a *building in the center of our county designed to hook your constituents into relentlessly feeding their money into machines*. Let's give the unions something to build that will bring benefits to our community, rather than prey on your voters' vulnerabilities.

Supporters have also been touting the tax revenue that may churn out from the casino. Let's blow away the smoke and mirrors: revenue a casino produces is generated on the backs of the most vulnerable among us. Studies show that 80% of casino revenue comes from slots, and up to 60% of slots revenue is siphoned from gambling addicts. It's the folks who will become gambling addicts - with 24 hour access to a casino, so close to their homes - who will be funding your tax revenue. That's money vacuumed from the pockets of your own constituents.

Rates of problem gambling and addiction go up in direct correlation with proximity to a casino. Your voters may be among those in our community whose lives will be shattered by gambling addiction. Among severe problem gamblers, approx 1 out of 5 report they've attempted suicide in the past year (source: foxnews.com). Casinos design their slot machines to maximize addiction; studies have shown that slot machines affect our brain function in a way similar to prescription opioids (source: "How Casinos Enable Gambling Addicts," *The Atlantic*, Dec 2016). Recent research from the United Kingdom shows that modern electronic slot machines have addiction rates as high as 50% (source: "Addictive Gambling Products," *Gambling with Lives*, 2022). Are you prepared to answer to bereaved family members whose loved one has committed suicide due to the overwhelming stress of being in debt from gambling? Are you prepared to pay for the increased social services that will be needed to care for gambling addicts and their families?

Gambling addicts frequently turn to crime to support their addiction. Studies show that they are seven times more likely to be arrested than non-gamblers. Overall, crime rates in suburban communities hosting casinos increase by 9%. For every 100,000 people, that implies as many as 615 more larcenies, 325 more burglaries, 272 more auto thefts, 10 more rapes, and 100 more aggravated assaults. (source: "Crime: Review of Economic and Statistics Study" Professor Earl L. Grinolds, 2011). Would you want your friends, neighbors, and family members to be victims of these crimes?

The National Association of Realtors indicates that the value of homes near a new casino often drops by 2-10%. Home values are not only a main source of retirement savings for your voters, the property taxes your voters pay also comprise a substantial part of our community's tax base. Have you quantified the value of lost property taxes, and how will you manage the long-term hit to the county's budget?

A proposal of this scale will undoubtedly strain our fragile environment, including air and water quality, and our already overburdened infrastructure, including our roadways, sewers and power grids. Recent development proposals for the HUB failed after the impact to our environment was assessed. Why would this proposal be any different?

Members of the Say No to the Casino Civic Association are proud to live, work, and raise our children here in this wonderful county. Members of our group are motivated to fight this proposal out of a powerful desire to make sure our government does what's best for all of us. We believe that a casino is the wrong answer for our community. End it now, Vote NO on the lease transfer.

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Say No to the Casino Civic Association is a non-partisan group, composed of Republicans, Democrats, and Independents from across Nassau County, who have come together with one goal: to stop the Sands Casino proposal. The group believes that a casino will have an unequivocally negative impact on our community and irrevocably change the character of our county. The group believes that a casino will lead to an increase in crime, gambling addiction, bankruptcy and home foreclosure rates; exacerbate traffic problems; impact our natural environment including air and water quality; depress home values; and strain law enforcement. We invite everyone in Nassau County to join us and get involved by signing our petition (<http://nocasinonassau.org/>), joining our Facebook group, and following us on Twitter (@NoCasinoLI).

Our petition: <http://nocasinonassau.org/>
Interested in getting involved in our group?
Email: nocasinonassau@gmail.com
Facebook: Say No to the Casino Civic Association
Twitter: @NoCasinoLI

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