

A Job is Not a Job is Not a Job... - Southeast Missourian

Written by Administrator
Monday, 04 October 2010 08:38 -

To those who STILL think that a casino and legalized gambling is the answer to a faltering and crumbling downtown, I offer facts and solid reasoning.

I understand that facts and solid reason makes many people uneasy, so I offer a disclaimer: If you are easily upset by factual evidence at the expense of your opinion-based beliefs, do not read any further. If you are content to do little research for

yourself concerning hot-button issues, do not read any further. If you have already made up your mind and don't wish to be "bothered" with things like facts, statistics, and plain-old common sense, you know what not to do.

Still with me? Excellent, let us proceed with the reasoning.

I understand, agree with, and completely respect the desire for the downtown area of Cape to get a boost in traffic and revenue. I, personally wish for the downtown to be supported more by its natives, other than relying on theoretical increased traffic. However, the empty storefronts and decaying buildings are not simply an eyesore and lost potential revenue, but they are a chance for someone with a dream, and enough drive to back it up, to make something of that dream and give back to the community by providing a service or product and thereby changing their future and possibly their destiny. I just don't see how a casino can facilitate the dream of anyone but the casino's itself.

Capewins.com claims that the Isle of Capri will create 450 permanent jobs and 400 construction jobs. While optimistic and believing in the ultimate good of humanity, I can't expect any job offered to pay proportionately more than the general wages of the area. This is no slam against NARS, but their pay is definitely within the "deemed applicable" acronym usage classification standard of J.O.B.: Just Over Broke. THEY brought in TONS of jobs, and they have a HUGE turnover rate. I'm not sure how much of the percentage of the population has worked there at some point, but I worked there, and now I don't. It was not the right job for me, as I could not support my family, let alone myself, on their wages. More power to you if you still work there, you definitely need it.

So, just because a place provides jobs, doesn't mean they are necessarily the RIGHT jobs. And as for the 400 construction jobs, when it's over and built, how long until your wages make their way back to their point of origin, and what will you do when you are laid off? Back to square one.

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Capewins.com also claims that the Isle of Capri will create "new opportunities for local businesses -- such as goods and services." When does a business with multiple restaurants inside of its walls buy food from local restaurants? When has a casino ever bought a pair of shoes, or a ring, or a tobacco water pipe, or an antique from a local, adjacent retailer? I can bet (ha! bet!) that the occurrence is more than likely very infrequent at best.

They also plan to build a 750 seat venue for multi-purpose/entertainment. Has the Show-Me Center been asleep on this one? Has anyone told them there is a competitor with ginorma-gargantuan-ly deep pockets trying to edge in to their turf? Has anyone told the Drury company that the Isle of Capri includes lodging in their list of services offered? Is this thing on? Testing....one, two, three.

The argument has also been made that a problem gambler will get their fix anyway, so what's the difference?

Anyone knows that an alcoholic faces increased temptation and probable relapse if they associate frequently with drinkers, or work at, or hang out in places that serve alcohol. The building of a casino will only exacerbate, or make worse, the pangs of their condition. You can also liken it to building a diabetic persons' house out of sugar; pretty soon, they're going to take a bite.

For your reading pleasure: "Mom lost eleven children in a deadly house fire in 1981. She had left the children home alone (10 months to 11 years old) while she was out gambling with their father in St. Louis. In the two decades since the fire, she has had six more children. Gambling lies near the center of most of the mom's problems. She loses consistently and often uses her children's public assistance money and checks for their various medical disorders to gamble, her children said. Consequently, she and her children have frequently been homeless."

St. Louis Post-Dispatch 3/26/01 By Denise Hollinshed

This is ONE of many, and one is one TOO many.

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If the increase in crime rates (and yes, they WILL increase) could be magically made better by hiring more police, then why is Nevada the dubious holder of the title "most dangerous state in the nation"? They have HUGE revenues from gambling. If revenue from casino dollars is the main focus for turning a blind eye to the horrifying prospect of our citizens turning into criminals like a zombie outbreak on prom night, then chew on this little tidbit: "Nearly half of the St. Louis city treasury's \$5.6 million gambling take must go to pay for police protection near the President Casino." St. Louis Post-Dispatch 4/22/97.

OUCH! I feel kinda funny....(moaning and shuffling) Argh! Gamble! Crime! Brains!!! But I digress...

Before anyone takes me for a change-hating, no-money-wanting, stick-in-the-mud, I want to make myself perfectly clear: I WANT NOTHING MORE THAN THE REVITALIZATION OF DOWNTOWN AND THE ECONOMIC CHANGE FOR THE BETTER IN THE CITY OF CAPE! A casino is just the wrong way. If we start jumping up and down over 450 permanent (probably low paying, high stress) jobs. The floor will eventually cave in under us, and who knows WHAT they have under THEIR floors?

I can continue to point and counter-point until I am blue in the face, but I will not. I will leave you with a list of organizations and their websites that can shed light on the immense scale of the problem we are willingly getting in to bed with. Benjamin Franklin beautifully explained: "We are all born ignorant, but one must work hard to remain stupid." We can choose to be either. Choose wisely. Take your stand on the side of what is TRULY right for Cape.

StopPredatoryGambling.org is a national political action committee of volunteer advocates who assist state movements and lobby for national gambling reform.

CAGNY: Coalition Against Gambling in New York State. This is a highly effective organization with great outreach and citizen involvement. It is winning the battle against deep-pocketed developers.

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Citizens Against Casino Gambling in Erie County - Organization opposing casino gaming in Erie County, New York, United States. Position, news, and events.

Cascade Locks No Casino: Oregonians in the Columbia River Gorge, a National Scenic Area and one of the nation's most pristine valleys fight an attempted 500,000 square foot off-reservation tribal casino.

CasinoFreePA is a statewide coalition of groups and individuals opposing casino gambling in Pennsylvania.

CasinoWatch: Missouri-based. Interesting and good presentation. Has some useful source material for talking points, especially re. the human issue.

Focus on Family -Citizen's Link has Gambling information compiled by Chad Hills and Focus on the Family. The second link points to an extensive library of studies by such experts as Earl Grinols and John Kindt.

Gambling With The Good Life is a grassroots citizen-action organization formed in 1995 for the specific purpose of opposing any further expansion of legalized gambling in Nebraska.

Granite State Coalition: Fresh ideas and up-to-date information about gambling in New Hampshire.

GREY2K USA: This site features common sense information about an industry that breeds, abuses and kills thousands of animals every year to fuel an outdated and dying animal-based gambling activity.

Kentucky League: The Kentucky League on Alcohol and Gambling Problems has been on the battlefield since 1914. It is a Christian organization with a number of church affiliations.

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MichGo was formed in November 2000 as a voice to stop the expansion of casino gambling in Michigan

New Mexico Coalition Against Gambling - A good site to examine how gambling effects a state and its economy. New Mexico plus national issues.

No Casino Gettysburg - Trying to stop a casino from defacing one of America's hallowed grounds -- the Gettysburg Battlefield in Pennsylvania.

No Casino Maryland - Group opposing slot machines in Maryland.

People Against a Casino Town (PACT) is Group of local citizens in Florence, Oregon, fighting a casino forced on their community. Website provides national as well as local information and links to news articles and research.

Say No To Casinos is working to keep casinos out of Kentucky at www.saynocasinos.com .

Stand Up for Clark County Citizens: A grass roots group of citizens currently battling against a Class III casino located next to residential homes in Clark County, Washington. Class III remains illegal in our Washington, but the proposed casino is a tribal casino.

Stand Up for Kansas A state-wide coalition of grassroots citizens who have a deep conviction that legalized gambling has a severe adverse impact on the economic and social quality of life of families and communities in Kansas and across the nation.

Stop The Casinos Pennsylvania is a citizen action group from Limerick Pennsylvania who are trying to stop Boyd Gaming Group from building a community in their community, plus attempting to educate their community of the ill effects of their state's rush to embrace slot machines.

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Voices of the Heartland is the web page for a grass roots organization called "No Casinos in Sedgwick County." The Harvey County Casino Free Coalition has joined with them in trying to curtail the expansion of gambling in south central Kansas and across the state.

WyBett: Wyoming's anti-gambling group that pounded gambling to a resounding defeat in 1994 now faces Indian gambling that violates state laws.

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