

Chicago - Billions of dollars and thousands of jobs will hang in the balance Monday when lawmakers debate whether to allow a huge expansion of gambling in Illinois.

The state legislature will hold a hearing at high noon Monday. It promises to be a showdown between the Goliaths of pro-gaming interests, and the much smaller Davids who want the expansion stopped.

The Task Force to

Oppose Gambling in Chicago is one opponent to more casinos.

Task Force spokesman Doug Dobmeyer said he is worried this attempt could increase gambling could work where others have failed because lawmakers are desperate to balance the books.

"We need money and so they see the casino as a way of getting money," Dobmeyer said. "They're not real interested in passing a tax increase."

State Rep. Lou Lang (D-Skokie) is a sponsor the bill that will allow five new casinos across the state.

On this week's "FOX Chicago Sunday" he said money is a big part of the reason why. Casinos could mean \$1 billion a year for Illinois -- plus thousands of jobs the state can't afford to deny.

"These are private people who want to invest in Illinois. Why do we care? We wouldn't tell mcdonalds not to build more burgers because there's a lot of burger joints, Lang said. "This is an industry like any other, and why shouldn't there be economic development all over the state of Illinois?"

Only one of the five new casinos would be in Chicago.

Chicago Casino Up for Debate - MyFox Chicago

Written by Administrator
Sunday, 02 January 2011 21:57 -

Some downtown boosters have floated the idea of Block 37 for that Chicago location.

That location could hinge on who is in City Hall.

The mayoral contender who most strongly opposed a Chicago casino is no longer in the race -- State Senator James Meeks.

Rahm Emanuel, Carol Moseley Braun and Gery Chico have said they are all open to the idea.

Miguel del Valle said he wants to hold a referendum and allow Chicago voters decide.

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