

Written by Administrator
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Lawmakers in the state of Massachusetts had the entire last session of 2010 to work out details of gambling expansion, but House Speaker Robert DeLeo, Senate President Therese Murray, and Governor Duval Patrick were unable to get on the same page on how to expand the industry.

The new session began today, and DeLeo was once again elected as the

House Speaker. In his speech to commemorate the election, DeLeo vowed once again to bring gambling expansion to the forefront of legislative discussions in the new year.

Despite the optimism that a deal would get done this session, there are still some major roadblocks ahead for the lawmakers. DeLeo still wants to see state racetracks gain the right to offer slot machines, while Patrick is opposed to the idea. Murray's stance closely resembles that of the governor.

Patrick, who ran his campaign years ago on the promise of bringing casino resorts to Massachusetts, is now not as enthusiastic that legislation can be completed. The governor has even said that gambling expansion is not high on his list of priorities this session.

"It's not at the top of my list and, frankly, unless we can figure out some way to come to terms on some of the big differences before it's filed," said Patrick, to reporters after DeLeo's spirited speech. "It (gambling debate) just sucks all the oxygen out of the place and we've got a lot of other work to do."

Murray broke from the governor's pessimistic attitude by claiming she would be in favor of re-engaging in the gambling discussion. The Senate President believes that thousands of jobs and much needed revenue in Massachusetts is a good reason to revisit the issue.

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