

GOVERNOR CHRISTIE SIGNS BOUTIQUE CASINO LEGISLATION - WMGM

Written by Administrator
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ATLANTIC CITY-- Small casinos could mean big business for Atlantic City. "I am very, very happy and grateful that the governor signed the 200 room bill," said Senator Jim Whelan (D).

It's legislation that Senator Jim Whelan has been fighting for. He sponsored a bill signed Wednesday evening by Governor Christie that could help improve Atlantic City's struggling gaming industry.

"We need new

product and given the economic realities of the financial world both nationally and locally we are not going to see billion dollar projects," said Whelan.

The legislation will allow 200-hundred room casino's to come to Atlantic City. Originally gaming resorts had to meet a 500-room minimum. The new law will permit licenses for one "small scale" and one "staged" property. A staged property will have to expand to a full-scale 500 room casino within 5 years. Both have to be constructed adjacent to the boardwalk. One investor is already interested.

"I spoke to Hard Rock today and they are anxious to get going. So lets get it to happen, lets get some shovels in the ground and lets puts some construction workers to work. When that process is over well have a new product for people to come in and enjoy," said Whelan.

The governor is hoping boutique casinos have a large impact. He put off signing the bill in December, and in a statement on Wednesday he said, "This bill will provide a boost to the engines of Atlantic City and the regional economy, brining badly needed jobs to the area and signaling the re-emergence of world-class entertainment."

"Atlantic City is no different than any other tourist destination. We need to have new product and Hard Rock represents that," said Whelan.

Whelan is hoping this will attract tourists and another investor, seeing this bill as something concrete to help the city move forward.

"I think the mere fact that there is investor confidence from someone to come in and bring

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several hundred million dollars is a pretty positive thing," said Whelan.

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