

## Millions poured into casino fight - Annapolis Capital

Written by Administrator

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Campaign finance reports made public Friday show the Maryland Jockey Club donated the entire \$3.275 million war chest No Slots at the Mall amassed to rally against the casino.

The pro-casino group, Jobs & Revenue for Anne Arundel County, raised \$2.6 million. Of that, \$600,000 came from a company controlled by casino developer The Cordish

Cos., and \$2 million came from Arundel Mills Limited Partnership, which developed the mall.

Much of the money raised in the campaign has been spent mainly on advertisements, which both sides have decried as mistruths.

With \$2.8 million going toward advertising alone, No Slots at the Mall has spent a million dollars more than the Jobs & Revenue group.

So far, campaigns have raised \$1.7 million more than organizations raised at the same point in 2008, when slots campaigns targeted voters across Maryland. The campaigns in Anne Arundel are exclusively funded by corporations with an economic interest in the vote's outcome.

David Jones, president of No Slots at the Mall, said Friday afternoon he has "never shied away from the fact we have a sponsor."

Joe Weinberg, a partner with Cordish, blamed the Penn National Gaming (which funds the jockey club) for the costly campaign. Weinberg said the company wants to protect its profits at a West Virginia casino by shutting down Arundel Mills.

"They understand a no vote ... means slots will not be allowed anywhere in Anne Arundel County, which is exactly what they want and why they are prepared to spend an obscene amount of money on this issue," Weinberg said by e-mail.

The new reports reflect money raised and spent. Another report is due Oct. 22. Information on

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funds spent in the last two weeks of the campaign will not be available until after Election Day.

Ballot Question A asks voters whether to uphold zoning for the Arundel Mills casino, which would be the state's largest, with 4,750 slot machines.

Residents near the mall have objected to the casino, fearing it would worsen traffic and increase crime. The group received aid from the Maryland Jockey Club and Penn National Gaming, a Cordish competitor.

Cordish argues the casino will bring 4,000 jobs to the area and millions in tax revenue to state and local governments.

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