

Odds of Orange County getting a casino look slim

Written by Administrator

Wednesday, 21 May 2014 11:24 -

The odds of Orange County landing one of the first four New York casino licenses this fall are about to get a lot longer, The Post has learned.

Gov. Cuomo favors the more economically hard-hit regions of the Catskills/Hudson Valley getting a first crack at jobs-building casinos and will press hard to get the first licenses issued in those areas, two sources close to the situation said.

“He will try to figure out how to put them [farther] upstate,” a source with knowledge of the governor’s thinking said.

While the Gaming Facility Location Board has the sole authority to pick the four license winners this fall, Cuomo can still exert pressure.

Five of the 22 groups looking to gain a casino license said they were looking at Orange County — an area about an hour north of New York City.

Cuomo and civic leaders in other parts of the Catskills/Hudson Valley region — one of three areas spotlighted by recent casino legislation — are concerned that building first in Orange, partly a commuter belt to the Big Apple, would put Sullivan County and Ulster County behind the eight ball.

The Hard Rock Casino withdrew its application to build an Orange County casino, the GFLB reported Tuesday.

Caesars Entertainment and Penn National have both recently expressed interest in building Orange County casinos near the Woodbury Common shopping complex. The Genting Group, which operates the Aqueduct racino, also wants to build in Orange County.

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Voters last fall approved a referendum to open casinos, and the governor sold it as a potential boon for upstate New York.

The two other areas under consideration for casino development are the Albany/Capital region and the Southern Tier/Finger Lakes region.

A spokesman for Cuomo denied the governor was planning on getting involved in the selection process.

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