

Bridgeport casino bill moves forward

Written by Administrator
Saturday, 17 March 2018 13:01 -

Although a bill allowing the state to seek bids for a new casino in Connecticut – most likely the one that has been proposed for Bridgeport – looked like it would die in committee on Friday, late efforts by Bridgeport legislators helped move it through the General Assembly’s Public Safety and Security Committee later in the day. Following the Committee’s 21-3 vote in favor, it will now go to the House for its consideration.



The bill directs the state Department of Consumer Protection to seek bids for a commercial casino in Connecticut and in its original form would have canceled a previously approved casino in East Windsor that was to be operated jointly by the Mohegan Tribe and Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation, owners of Mohegan Sun and Foxwoods Resort Casino.

The new version of the bill will allow the East Windsor operation – seen as a way to help protect the tribes from competition from the MGM Grand casino under construction in Springfield, Massachusetts – to go ahead. It is still pending federal approval.

MGM, which has proposed a \$675 million waterfront casino for Bridgeport that it says will create some 7,000 jobs, has been lobbying for open competition for about a year, essentially arguing that such a process would prove the value of its own proposal.

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The Bridgeport casino has been heavily supported by Bridgeport Mayor Joe Ganim and various other city representatives and senators. On Thursday, Connecticut Attorney General George Jepsen came out in favor of the bill, writing to the committee: "As a legal matter, however, it is my opinion that the proposed legislation would not run afoul of our existing agreements with the Tribes."

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