

Northam signs bill that could lead to casino in Danville

Written by Administrator
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DANVILLE, Va. (WSET) -- Governor Ralph Northam has signed legislation that could eventually result in a casino coming to Virginia, most notably in Danville.

[Senate Bill 1126](#) was signed into law on Friday, [according to the Bristol-Herald Courier](#) .

The bill directs the Joint Legislative and Review Commission to conduct a comprehensive study of casino gaming regulations for review by December 1.

It also establishes a Lottery Board to regulate casino gaming in Virginia.

"Casino gaming shall be limited to certain cities that meet the criteria that is outlined in the bill, and a referendum must be passed in the city on the question of allowing casino gaming in the city," the bill reads.

The legislation could eventually lead to a casino in Danville that city council announced last year.

The cost of the project would be \$250 million, and would be built from 2020-2024. They ideally would open it in 2022, and would be operating at full capacity by 2028.

Legislation has to be re-enacted by the General Assembly during the 2020 session. If that happens, it will then have to establish a series of deadlines.

"The bill contains enactment clauses that prohibit (i) any referendum from being held prior to the publication of the JLARC findings and recommendations regarding casino gaming or after January 1, 2021, and (ii) the Board from issuing a license to operate a gaming operation before July 1, 2020," the bill reads.

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Casinos would be [limited to three cities](#) with economic challenges, Bristol, Danville, and Portsmouth. The Pamunkey Indian Tribe is also trying to establish a casino in Richmond and [Norfolk](#).

[Danville Vice Mayor Lee Vogler](#) said if the casino becomes fully operational, it would employ 5,200 workers and host about 4 million guests every year.

A [study showed](#) a high economic impact:

- A one-time economic impact of \$118.7 million and 182 jobs for the renovation and construction of a casino resort.
- In 2022, the project would generate 2,534 direct and indirect/induced jobs.
- By 2028, the project would grow to 5,426 direct jobs and 1,408 indirect/induced jobs.
- In 2022, the project would generate a direct and indirect/induced economic impact of \$384.8 million.
- By 2028, the direct economic impact would grow to \$909 million, with another \$183 million in indirect/induced impact.
- In 2022, the project would generate \$12.1 million in local taxes.
- By 2028, the local taxes would grow to \$20.3 million.

Now that the [governor has signed the bill](#), Danville citizens will get the chance to weigh in.

Read more <http://wset.com/news/at-the-capitol/northam-signs-bill-that-could-lead-to-casino-in-danville>