

Nebraska Supreme Court decision puts casino gambling measure on November ballot

Written by Administrator

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LINCOLN, Neb. (KTIV) - The Nebraska Supreme Court has ruled a measure to allow casino gambling at horse racing tracks can appear on the ballot.

The gambling drive was spearheaded by horse-racing advocates and Ho-Chunk Inc., the economic development arm of the Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska, which has plans for a casino and events center at the former Atokad Downs in South Sioux City.

The three measures on the ballot November 3rd would change Nebraska's constitution to allow gambling, and create two laws to regulate and tax the industry. If passed, some of the tax revenue would be funneled into a state property tax credit. "Nebraskans are actually spending about \$380-million a year at out-of-state casinos," said Drew Niehaus, "Keep the Money in Nebraska". "So, bringing a good chunk of that money back into the state means that all of that tax revenue can help the state. And, with 70-percent earmarked specifically for property tax, it's a big thing for Nebraskans everywhere whether they live close to a casino, or not."

But, backers of the anti-gambling group, "Gambling With The Good Life", say supporters are being deceived when it comes to the property tax benefits of the gambling measures. "Everything he told you was a lie," said Pat Loontjer, Executive Director of Gambling with the Good Life. "The property tax thing, if you analyze it, is something like \$30 per year per family. There's no property tax relief."

In 2016, a similar measure to allow casino gambling in Nebraska failed to qualify for the general election ballot. In 2016, Nebraska's Secretary of State said backers didn't collect enough valid signatures to put the measure on the ballot.

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