

Report raises possible NYC casino delay

Written by Administrator

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SCHENECTADY — A study commissioned by the state Gaming Commission raises the possibility of delaying the licensing of new casinos in New York City in order to let the existing upstate facilities better recover from the damage wrought by the ongoing COVID-19 [pandemic](#), which had them closed for a time in the summer and only now reopening on a reduced basis.

“In light of the unprecedented COVID-19 situation and the resulting economic fallout, the State of New York could opt to delay, for an undetermined period, the decision to authorize three commercial casinos in the Downstate region,” stated the report from Spectrum Gaming Group consultants.

“Such a decision would have both positive and negative implications and results,” said the study. Under the state’s original casino laws, up to three casinos were to be licensed in 2023 – after the 2015 licenses given to four upstate facilities including Rivers in Schenectady.

The idea was to let casinos upstate establish themselves before having to compete with those in densely populated, customer-rich New York City.

The advantages of a delay would let upstate casinos better adjust to conditions, which have, at least for this year, deteriorated due to the pandemic.

On the other hand, delaying the 2023 licensing would mean that revenues in licensing fees and ultimately casino revenues would also be delayed.

Additionally, many believe that New Jersey voters may ultimately approve a casino in the northern part of the state near New York City, allowing the Garden State to get a jump on the competition.

[Spectrum New York Gaming Study Executive Summary, Final](#) by [rkarlin](#) on Scribd

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That analysis comes amid pressure from both politicians and casino companies to speed up the New York City process in order to bring in more revenue faster.

Gov. Andrew Cuomo earlier in January said he remained skeptical over what could be a “knee jerk reaction” to the state’s budgetary woes.

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