

I am writing to express my unconditional support for ONE Casino.

Let me be clear about one point: I have never received any campaign contributions from ONE Casino and I have zero financial interest in the project or any other casino. Rather, my unconditional support for this new casino is based entirely on what I think is in the best interest of Richmonders, especially residents of South Richmond.

There are five main reasons to get behind this casino project: The area where the casino will be built is currently a blighted, industrial wasteland where absolutely no business is located or has been located in more than 150 years. A brand new casino will transform this particular area of South Richmond.

After construction is completed, 1,500 permanent jobs will be created with an average salary of \$55,000 per year. The lowest paying job will have a minimum wage of at least \$15 an hour.

Unlike the proposed Coliseum project, this is not a city "giveaway." The casino is buying the land itself, the city is not extending any tax credits, this is not a TIFF project and zero cash incentives are being offered to the casino.

The City of Richmond commissioned Convergence Group Study estimated that the casino will generate \$500 million in tax revenue in the first 10 years alone. This money will go to infrastructure improvements, including stormwater run-off, new schools, South Side beautification, etc.

The Convergence Group Study also estimates that the casino will attract 3.7 million tourists to Richmond, where they will dine, spend money, go to retail stores, tour historic landmarks, engage in retail shopping and maybe even take in a Flying Squirrels game.

Some people are opposed to this casino because they are simply opposed to gambling. That is their choice and I respect it. However, let's be candid. Virginians, including Richmonders, are

Written by Administrator

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going to gamble. Accordingly, do we want Virginians to take their money to our neighboring sister states like Maryland, West Virginia, North Carolina, Pennsylvania and New Jersey and gamble their money there or would we prefer that Virginia and other sister state residents come to Richmond and participate in gaming right here in the capital city? The answer is a no brainer.

ONE Casino will be the biggest economic stimulator ever for South Richmond. No other industry even comes close.

The choice is: Keep the area as it is currently — a barren wasteland where no industry has ever sprouted or, instead, create a beautiful mecca of entertainment with fabulous hotels, beautiful gaming facilities, extravagant shows, top-notch restaurants, infrastructure and housing improvements and a state-of-the-art “green space.”

I’m for the ONE Casino project and I hope that you will be, too. Please vote “yes” on the casino referendum this November.

SEN. JOSEPH D. “JOE” MORRISSEY

Richmond

The writer represents the 16th District in the Virginia Senate.

Read more <http://richmondfreepress.com/news/2021/oct/14/vote-yes-one-casino/>