

## Letter: Casino Will Be Unprofitable and Harmful

Written by Administrator

Saturday, 27 November 2021 14:21 -

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State College is not a profitable location to build a casino.

How do we know? In 2019, after five other mini-casino licenses had already been approved for other locations in Pennsylvania, [no casino operator was willing](#) to bid even \$7.5 million for a license to build a casino in State College. Even in 2019, before COVID lockdowns decimated the travel and tourism industries, it was obvious to casino developers across the nation that Central Pennsylvania is sparsely populated and that few people will travel here from neighboring cities or other states to gamble when larger and better casinos are already available closer to those locations.

Nevertheless, after [plans for the Mount Airy mini-casino collapsed](#) in late 2019, the leadership of Bally's Corporation determined that it might be able to scrape enough revenue from the last untapped land-casino market in Pennsylvania to make at least a marginal profit from a mini-casino in the former Macy's location at the Nittany Mall. Fantastically, [they claim that this new mini-casino will extract \\$116 million in annual revenue](#) from our community on a sustained basis — an amount larger than the entire annual revenue of Penn State's football program!

From whom will this revenue come? The impact report for the proposed casino does not provide this information, but it is well known that gambling addiction is more prevalent among young people than it is among the adult population at large. It is also known that gambling addiction is more prevalent in communities located in close proximity to land-based casinos. It is a good bet that these factors played a significant role in Bally's decision to select a location just a few miles from the large concentration of undergraduate students who live at Penn State's University Park campus for their new casino.

Research shows that young adults are particularly susceptible to problem gambling and that [approximately 6% of college students have a gambling problem](#). Out of a population of approximately 47,000 students at Penn State University Park, as many as 2,820 students would suffer psychological difficulties, unmanageable debt and failing grades as a result of gambling addiction in just the first year after the proposed casino opens. It is likely that the leadership of the proposed casino is counting on these gambling-addicted students to provide a significant portion of their projected revenues. The affected students will pay for that revenue with their futures, and the rest of us will pay through the loss of the scientific, cultural and artistic developments that these students will never achieve if they drop out of school due to gambling addiction.

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Fortunately, we can still stop the proposed casino from being built. The Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board is still accepting public feedback about the proposed casino via e-mail at [\[email protected\]](#)

. E-mails should reference "Nittany Mall Casino" in their title and should ask the Board to deny the proposed casino's licensing application. Please write to the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board today, while we can still make a difference!

*Andrew Shaffer,  
State College*

**Read more** <https://www.statecollege.com/letter-casino-will-be-unprofitable-and-harmful/>