
From: Daniel Materna <sailordan76@verizon.net>
Sent: Monday, April 4, 2022 6:42 PM
To: Jennifer Snyder
Cc: CTCouncil; Adam Brumbaugh; mike@centrecountypa.gov; mark@centrecountypa.gov; sdershem@centrecountypa.gov
Subject: PGCB has just posted 45 pages of casino-related public feedback
Attachments: SC_Gaming_Late_public_comment_3-12-22_through_3-31-22.pdf

Good afternoon, Jen,

The Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board (PGCB) has just posted the most recently received casino-related public comments regarding the proposed casino at the Nittany Mall.

The attached 45-page .pdf document covers the period of March 12 through March 31. There are no comments in favor of the casino.


Your help with updating the College Township website with this most recent feedback is greatly appreciated!

Sincerely,
Dan Materna
Howard, PA

Lloyd, Linda (PGCB)

From: Dana Voigt <danavoigt@ymail.com>
Sent: Saturday, March 12, 2022 10:01 PM
To: GB, Board Clerk
Subject: [External] Nittany mall Casino

ATTENTION: This email message is from an external sender. Do not open links or attachments from unknown sources. To report suspicious email, forward the message as an attachment to CWOPA_SPAM@pa.gov.

You have GOT to be kidding right? It's a joke...it has to be. In a town LITTERED with college students that can't even use cross walks safely, you'll GLADLY place a casino within a \$10 Uber right of these same kids?! So...let me guess..."they're adults, they can make decisions" WERE YOU EVER IN COLLEGE (I'm guessing a very intelligent person/people are in charge here because of the gross lack of common sense.) yes, they're adults. They can buy porn, cigarettes and most can get black out drunk (have you read about the multiple deaths due to plain old poor decision making in this area?!) but you'll pray on them like a true group of heartless, money hungry folks...and you'll hope they make even worse mistakes at a casino because, MONEY! And that's all I have on the horrendous decision a casino in this area is in relation to the obvious. Generations of my family are here, I have two daughters and a step son. This is the ONLY area to make a livable wage. My children stand at the bus stop which is along the benner pike, what kind of folks does a casino bring in?! They sure aren't all the best in the barrel. So let's talk hypothetically, some piece of garbage human who (like others who pray on adolescents) likes kids, likes to gamble. I'm sure acquiring drugs wouldn't be too tough near or in a casino, and they decide to cause some kind of harm to, really ANYONES kids in this area...all of that money you've since swindled from the college kids and out of town visitors, will be gone and then some because in all honesty, YOU, reading this, were informed of a possibility, and me, a very VERY determined mother bear...I'm just one of many. Should this casino come in, we will be sure to make it the most miserable experience for those in charge. Traffic increase? Constant complaints by those of us that live here, work here and are TRYING TO RAISE DECENT HUMAN BEINGS! One single instance of someone from the casino even looks my child's way, charges. I will not back down. I do not want this trash compactor of a business in our town. We are a very close knit community and that makes us very strong...and we all agree on one thing, take this casino and shove it...

Sent from my iPhone

Lloyd, Linda (PGCB)

From: Phyllis Gardener <ptgard62@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 13, 2022 10:19 AM
To: GB, Board Clerk
Subject: [External] Nittany Mall Casino

***ATTENTION:** This email message is from an external sender. Do not open links or attachments from unknown sources. To report suspicious email, forward the message as an attachment to CWOPA_SPAM@pa.gov.*

I object strongly to establishing a casino in the Nittany mall because it would be very harmful to the community as well as to college students. There is no good reason to have one and many, many reasons not to.

Phyllis Gardener
ptgard62@gmail.com
State College Borough Resident

Lloyd, Linda (PGCB)

From: Fran Osseo-Asare <fran@betumi.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 13, 2022 12:16 PM
To: GB, Board Clerk
Subject: [External] Nittany Mall Casino

***ATTENTION:** This email message is from an external sender. Do not open links or attachments from unknown sources. To report suspicious email, forward the message as an attachment to CWOPA_SPAM@pa.gov.*

I would like to register our family's strong opposition to the proposed Nittany Mall Casino and the likely negative effects on the community—particularly for our large student population.

Fran Osseo-Asare, MSW, PhD
BETUMI: The African Culinary Network
www.betumi.com
www.betumiblog.blogspot.com
fran@betumi.com

Lloyd, Linda (PGCB)

From: andy1@verizon.net
Sent: Sunday, March 13, 2022 1:54 PM
To: GB, Board Clerk
Subject: [External] Nittany Mall Casino

***ATTENTION:** This email message is from an external sender. Do not open links or attachments from unknown sources. To report suspicious email, forward the message as an attachment to CWOPA_SPAM@pa.gov.*

To whom it may concern:

Please have it be known that the State College, Pa./Happy Valley area is in zero need for the Nittany Mall Casino, which is being considered.

It would grossly stain our essentially, crime-free community, by introducing a corrupting temptation to the local populace of 50,000, mostly working class residents, & have a terrible influence on the 30,000 undergrad/grad students on the Penn State main campus, which would be only 7 miles from the prospective casino.

So, I ask you to vote your conscience, and deny the gaming license to the Nittany Mall Casino.

Thank-you.

Sincerely,

Mr Drew Yablonsky

Lloyd, Linda (PGCB)

From: Strauss, Susan G <sgs9@psu.edu>
Sent: Monday, March 14, 2022 1:04 PM
To: GB, Board Clerk
Subject: [External] opposing the casino at the Nittany Mall

***ATTENTION:** This email message is from an external sender. Do not open links or attachments from unknown sources. To report suspicious email, forward the message as an attachment to CWOPA_SPAM@pa.gov.*

Dear Board Clerk,

Please listen closely to the voices of our State College and Penn State Community.

We are adamantly opposed to a casino being built at the Nittany Mall or anywhere near State College and Penn State.

This will be a source of problems for this community. There are many other ways we can use the space for the benefit of our entire community.

The casino will generate lots of revenue for the owners and for College Township (why CT approved this in the first place is a major mystery). It will not benefit our community. The reasons are so obvious, and all have been itemized in earlier correspondences.

Please listen closely to these voices of opposition.

Sincerely,
Susan Strauss

Lloyd, Linda (PGCB)

From: rjdorman31@comcast.net
Sent: Monday, March 14, 2022 1:15 PM
To: GB, Board Clerk; GB, Board Clerk
Subject: [External] State college casino

ATTENTION: *This email message is from an external sender. Do not open links or attachments from unknown sources. To report suspicious email, forward the message as an attachment to CWOPA_SPAM@pa.gov.*

I oppose the plan for a casino so close to the Penn State campus. Our students are tomorrow's future and there is enough Evil things for them to get involved in already. They don't need the added temptation of gambling so PA government can fill their coffers with revenues. Please find another place. Our kids welfare is more important than the revenue money. Thank you Judith Dorman

Sent from my LG Mobile

Lloyd, Linda (PGCB)

From: Sheryl <robandssheryl@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, March 14, 2022 3:15 PM
To: GB, Board Clerk
Subject: [External] Casino concerns

***ATTENTION:** This email message is from an external sender. Do not open links or attachments from unknown sources. To report suspicious email, forward the message as an attachment to CWOPA_SPAM@pa.gov.*

Please add my name to the many who do not want this casino in my community.

I lived in Tucson about 2 miles from a casino. I saw first hand how it effected the community there and micro-cosmically, one of my neighbors almost lost his family to a gambling addiction.

Respectfully,

Sheryl Groner
814-505-6456

Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android

Lloyd, Linda (PGCB)

From: Nancy Cord-Baran <ncb612@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 14, 2022 6:23 PM
To: GB, Board Clerk
Subject: [External]

***ATTENTION:** This email message is from an external sender. Do not open links or attachments from unknown sources. To report suspicious email, forward the message as an attachment to CWOPA_SPAM@pa.gov.*

I am writing to request that the casino in state college be denied.
There are many people opposed to it, eight to one in favor of it.
It is not a good idea and will hurt young people, people who can't afford it.
So many of us have addictive genetic predispositions.

Also, there are so many places that need workers. How would they be able to staff it.
Every place that have allowed gambling also has a rise in bankruptcies.
Crime may increase, property values may decrease. We as a township do not want this.

Please turn down the request.
Nancy Cord-Baran

Lloyd, Linda (PGCB)

From: Alison Amaismeier <alison@amaismeier.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 11:26 AM
To: president@psu.edu
Cc: GB, Board Clerk
Subject: [External] opposition to Nittany Mall casino

***ATTENTION:** This email message is from an external sender. Do not open links or attachments from unknown sources. To report suspicious email, forward the message as an attachment to CWOPA_SPAM@pa.gov.*

President Barron,

As a resident of Ferguson Township in Centre County, I am opposed to the development of a casino at Nittany Mall. At a time when it is extremely difficult for existing businesses to hire enough personnel, I question the need to open additional businesses that might draw the labor force away from locally-owned or long-time businesses in the area.

Additionally, opening a casino in close proximity to a college campus seems unwise. College students are already drowning in excessive student and personal debt, and easy access to a gambling facility would only serve to heighten the financial strain already experienced by these young people.

The mall structure does represent a site with commercial potential, but let's think beyond gambling and evaluate options that would actually benefit our town and the Penn State campus.

As an influential leader in the Centre region, I urge you to use your influence to raise awareness of the negative effects that a casino would have on our community. Please promote the well-being of this community and your students by publicly opposing and speaking out against this project.

Sincerely,
Alison Amaismeier

Lloyd, Linda (PGCB)

From: MJ <mgreyghost@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 12:16 PM
To: president@psu.edu
Cc: GB, Board Clerk
Subject: [External] We strongly oppose a casino in our area - Nittany Mall Casino proposal

ATTENTION: This email message is from an external sender. Do not open links or attachments from unknown sources. To report suspicious email, forward the message as an attachment to CWOPA_SPAM@pa.gov.

Dear Sir,

Please voice strong opposition to a casino in our area. What a horrible thing for a college town.

Our Penn State students are a population known to be vulnerable to gambling addiction and sports betting is already out of hand.

You have served the University and our community well and I hope you will make opposition to this casino a highlight of your final days for us.

We are now a desirable location and a casino would detract from our small town, family friendly charm. We have University sports, theatre and other events that attract many, and can feel that we are a safe environment.

The associated gambling addiction and pulling "entertainment" dollars from local business and University activities are the big negatives to consider.

Would this attract "loan sharks" as some over extend their finances, again students being the most vulnerable.

Sincerely,

Mary Jane Stout

Joseph T. Stout

603 Old Farm Lane

State College, PA

16803

MJ

Lloyd, Linda (PGCB)

From: J H <jvhouston00@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 12:22 PM
To: president@psu.edu
Cc: GB, Board Clerk
Subject: [External] Proposed casino

***ATTENTION:** This email message is from an external sender. Do not open links or attachments from unknown sources. To report suspicious email, forward the message as an attachment to CWOPA_SPAM@pa.gov.*

Dear President Barron,

As a long standing State College resident who lives just down the hill from the proposed casino I want to urge you to speak out against this nefarious and predatory business coming to our lovely community. I strongly believe this will become nothing but a scourge to our town and the surrounding area, just as it has done to so many other communities. The so called benefit of "jobs" and revenue will come at a very dear price to us. I was born in Bellefonte, spent my childhood years in State College, attended Penn State, along with my spouse, 4 children and many relatives. What has been considered Happy Valley for generations for so long will become Death Valley from addictions and trafficking. It will affect the University students and campus negatively as well. Many studies and data on this have been cited and have been pointed out already. There is nothing good in this proposal. Please, please, please use your voice for reason and good.

Respectfully,

Jeanne Houston

Lloyd, Linda (PGCB)

From: Strauss, Susan G <sgs9@psu.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 1:23 PM
To: Office of the President
Cc: GB, Board Clerk
Subject: [External] Opposition to the casino at the Nittany Mall

***ATTENTION:** This email message is from an external sender. Do not open links or attachments from unknown sources. To report suspicious email, forward the message as an attachment to CWOPA_SPAM@pa.gov.*

Dear President Barron,

I have been a faculty member at PSU since August, 1998. I have adopted 6 school-age children from Ethiopia and have been raising them here as a single parent since 2010 (and 2011).

State College is and has been an ideal town to raise children, which is why we have stayed (Believe me, we had countless reasons to leave, but we stayed for the well-being of my family). State College is safe. It is community-minded. And it has become home to me and my six children.

Please know that I am adamantly opposed to the introduction of a casino in or near State College. Our neighbors adamantly oppose the casino.

Adding a casino to our town will inevitably change us. It will transform our values. It will transform our neighborhoods. It will transform Penn State and sadly a part of this Penn State "family" that PSU so proudly promotes.

The once-lively Nittany Mall does not need a casino to revive the economy of our town. It does not need slot machines, blackjack tables, sports betting, alcohol, gambling addiction...and worse...

We do hope the Penn State will soon voice its opposition to this plan -- that it will stand up for us; for the community; for Penn State and the Penn State "family," and say no. Loudly. Clearly. Strongly.

Please.

Sincerely,
Susan Strauss

Lloyd, Linda (PGCB)

From: Jane Sleigh <janesleigh@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 3:06 PM
To: president@psu.edu; GB, Board Clerk; andrewshaffer148@gmail.com
Subject: [External] opposition to proposed casino

***ATTENTION:** This email message is from an external sender. Do not open links or attachments from unknown sources. To report suspicious email, forward the message as an attachment to CWOPA_SPAM@pa.gov.*

Dear President Barron,

Please represent the State College community in opposition to the plans for a casino here. Nothing good can come of it; there are better, far less harmful ways to keep our area thriving. Please use your voice to protect what we have here, which is valuable indeed.

Thank you so much.

Jane Sleigh

Lloyd, Linda (PGCB)

From: andyy1@verizon.net
Sent: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 3:12 PM
To: president@psu.edu; GB, Board Clerk; andrewshaffer148@gmail.com
Subject: [External] Nittany Mall Casino would be a pox on the culture & students of Penn State.

***ATTENTION:** This email message is from an external sender. Do not open links or attachments from unknown sources. To report suspicious email, forward the message as an attachment to CWOPA_SPAM@pa.gov.*

Dear President Barron,

As a '72 PSU alum, I implore you to please speak out undeniably, AGAINST approval for establishing a full service Casino @ the Nittany Mall, which, incredulously, would be a mere 3.1 miles from Penn State's flagship campus!

And, beyond my incredulity about the proposal of this sordid project, is that the man who is the Casino's chief developer/investor/promoter is one of us! He is Penn State alum & ex-Penn State trustee---Ira Lubert!

For Mr. Lubert to ignore, and instead aggressively attempt to befoul & stain, the elite culture that the Penn State's University Park campus has cultivated within educational/professional circles, is unconscionable!

Is nothing sacred to Mr. Lubert?

Dr. Barron, throughout your commendable 6 year term, you've continued in the tradition of those before you, to uphold the highest principles for a Penn State education, in so much that the Penn State educational experience is rated a "Public Ivy," rare air qualification for providing a high-class education, comparable to those of the Ivy League. Congratulations, Dr. Barron, to you and your administration on a job well done!

So, do not permit your good work to be stained.

I understand, Dr. Barron, that your decision to oppose a Casino license approval, may be fraught with anxiety, as you must have crossed paths with Mr. Lubert, in the past, in his Trustee and PSU support activities.

But, I must appeal, with all due respect, Dr. Barron, to your conscience. You know the right thing to do here. You must champion the sanctity of a Penn State education, and try to protect all students from corruptive forces in their formative years.

You must DISAGREE with Mr. Lubert on this matter. And in doing so, you will be held in the highest esteem by the vast majority of the university community, & the good citizens of Happy Valley. I guarantee it!

And, in my opinion, @ some level within Mr. Lubert, he will then come to understand, by your example, Dr. Barron, the true meaning of being Penn State Proud!

I look forward to your public announcement decrying the Casino license approval.

I wish nothing but the best of health and happiness, to you and yours, in your retirement.

Sincerely,

Mr. Andy Yablonsky
Centre Hall, Pa.

Lloyd, Linda (PGCB)

From: Lidong Luo <luolidong1108@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 3:35 PM
To: president@psu.edu
Cc: GB, Board Clerk; andrewshaffer148@gmail.com
Subject: [External] Fwd: Oppose the Casino in Nittany Mall

***ATTENTION:** This email message is from an external sender. Do not open links or attachments from unknown sources. To report suspicious email, forward the message as an attachment to CWOPA_SPAM@pa.gov.*

Dear President Barron,

My husband and I are both Penn State alumni and also working in State College. We feel shocked to learn that there is a possibility to open a casino in our area.

State College is a city who has a famous university - Pennsylvania State University. It has the responsibility to teach young students knowledge, and the cutting edge technology, not to teach them the way how to gamble.

If the casino is built, how to prevent the addiction that the university students might have and quit their study?

If the casino is built, will more police force can be hired to protect the safety of the city? In these pandemic years, the safety problem is getting worse and worse.

We chose to study at Penn State because it is not only a famous university but also it is in a safe and happy town.

When a casino is built, the safety is threatened and we don't know how to keep our kids from the temptation. State College will be no longer attracting the young parents to move in and the ranking of Penn State will go down.

Please take our opinion into consideration. We really think it's a bad idea to open a casino near Penn State campus. Please let State College remain to be a clear and beautiful college town.

Thank you for your consideration.
Zhao's family

Lloyd, Linda (PGCB)

From: Pitterle, John Thomas <jxp10@psu.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 8:18 PM
To: GB, Board Clerk
Subject: [External] Fw: Gambling is Not Beneficial; Please Speak Publicly Against Casino

***ATTENTION:** This email message is from an external sender. Do not open links or attachments from unknown sources. To report suspicious email, forward the message as an attachment to CWOPA_SPAM@pa.gov.*

I forgot to CC you when I sent the following email to PSU's President Barron.
 John

From: Pitterle, John Thomas
Sent: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 8:16 PM
To: Office of the President <President@psu.edu>
Subject: Gambling is Not Beneficial; Please Speak Publicly Against Casino

Dear President Barron,

Gambling is not good and helpful. Plain and simple. It is not a positive thing for society.

Most people do not teach their kids how to gamble, practice gambling, and hope they will spend lots of time and money gambling in the future.

Gambling does not yield good results in a society or city. It leads to problems and trouble.

Gambling is not a good and desirable behavior and practice. So, why would we even want to consider opening up a gambling facility in town?

I realize that a relatively few people might get jobs. I realize that there will be tax income for the state. But the latter does not make an undesirable thing become desirable.

Legally selling all kinds of (currently illegal) drugs and narcotics could also bring in more tax money, but making illegal drugs available to everyone is also not something good and desirable that we want in our region.

Gambling typically attracts some undesirable behavior, actors, and activities. We do not want or need these in State College.

Gambling often impacts the poorest the most. It would probably hurt the poorer people of this region the most.

Gambling can lead to addictive behavior. Gambling can lead to debt.

It's just not worth the risk of bringing it to town.

This should be a no-brainer. There are hardly any significant benefits. A few people can find jobs elsewhere these days as there appears to be no shortage of job openings.

So, the only potential benefit is additional tax income. But promoting and establishing an undesirable activity for the sake of tax income is a bad idea.

In general, people do not want their children to grow up to be consistent and long-term gamblers. So, please, let's avoid all of the potential problems and dark activity that can go along with a gambling facility.

We do not want a gambling location in this region.

The only people who will make money, long-term, are the casino and the government via taxes. The large majority of people coming to the casino will lose money. The odds are against them.

So, why would we want to help people lose money? This does not make any sense.

And let's also help people avoid developing gambling problems or debt issues. We can do this by saying "no" to the proposed casino.

Please let your voice be heard to help cancel the local casino plans.

Please speak out against the casino on behalf of our community.

Thank you very much,

John

Lloyd, Linda (PGCB)

From: Cassie Konkle <faeriechilde@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 8:49 PM
To: GB, Board Clerk
Subject: [External] Nittany Mall Casino

***ATTENTION:** This email message is from an external sender. Do not open links or attachments from unknown sources. To report suspicious email, forward the message as an attachment to CWOPA_SPAM@pa.gov.*

Hello,

I am writing to voice an opinion about the proposed casino at the Nittany Mall. I do not think a casino would be good for our community. Instead of spending money supporting local businesses, people will be throwing away their money at a casino. I do not see how this could possibly benefit the community. A casino would take money away from our community and increase the incidence of gambling addiction and all of the negative fallout that comes along with addiction. I believe a casino would be particularly bad for the college student community. The economy of State College is very closely tied to the University. College students already struggle with overindulging in alcohol. The enticement of a nearby gambling establishment would only add another unhealthy pass time for students to engage in. I hope you will consider the concerns of the people who live in the State College area and not bring a casino into our community.

Sincerely,

--Cassie Konkle

Lloyd, Linda (PGCB)

From: horacio perezblanco <horneop@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 9:43 PM
To: president@psu.edu
Cc: GB, Board Clerk; Andrew Shaffer
Subject: [External] Opposition to casino in Nittany Mall

ATTENTION: This email message is from an external sender. Do not open links or attachments from unknown sources. To report suspicious email, forward the message as an attachment to CWOPA_SPAM@pa.gov.

Dear Dr. Barron,

I would like to voice my firm opposition to the proposed casino. This establishment would hardly line up with the academic, athletic and charitable defining characteristics of the community. For those who find it necessary to find an outlet in terms of games of chance, there certainly are plenty of online opportunities to do so. A physical casino would only bring traffic, congestion and economic weakness that are not wanted by the population, in exchange for a few jobs of dubious meaning.

Respectfully submitted,

H. Perez-Blanco

Professor Emeritus, Mechanical Engineering, Penn State.

Lloyd, Linda (PGCB)

From: rebecca misangyi <rebeccamisangyi@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 17, 2022 7:10 AM
To: GB, Board Clerk
Subject: [External] Casino in college township, PA

***ATTENTION:** This email message is from an external sender. Do not open links or attachments from unknown sources. To report suspicious email, forward the message as an attachment to CWOPA_SPAM@pa.gov.*

To the Board,

I am one hundred percent opposed to having a casino in our community. It is the complete antithesis of life here and will be a community destroyer. Do not bring that harm into our community. No amount of money is worth that harm. You know the harms and who will be hurt. Do not allow this to happen.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Misangyi, State College

Lloyd, Linda (PGCB)

From: Andrew Shaffer <andrewshaffer148@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 17, 2022 3:26 PM
To: GB, Board Clerk
Subject: [External] Still More Additional Public Feedback Regarding Proposed Casino at Nittany Mall

***ATTENTION:** This email message is from an external sender. Do not open links or attachments from unknown sources. To report suspicious email, forward the message as an attachment to CWOPA_SPAM@pa.gov.*

Dear Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board,

As you are evaluating the licensing decision for the proposed casino at the Nittany Mall, please consider the following additional letters to the editor that have been published by the Centre Daily Times and StateCollege.com regarding this casino since I last submitted information on this topic on 2/17/2022. A total of eight additional casino-related letters to the editor have been published on these sites during this time period, with seven letters opposing to the casino and one in support. One of the letters also includes additional comments about the casino from 31 different community members in its comments section, so I am including those comments as well.

The relevant letters are copied below and have been sorted chronologically for your convenience. Each letter is also followed by a link to the URL from which it was copied on 3/17/2022.

Additionally, a colleague of mine named Stephen Olson informed me that he submitted an e-mail to boardclerk@pa.gov on 2/11/2022 opposing the proposed Nittany Mall Casino, but his message does not appear in either the additional public feedback from the 1/27/2022-2/11/2022 time period (https://gamingcontrolboard.pa.gov/files/public_input/SC_Gaming_Late_public_comment_1-27-22_through_2-11-22.pdf) or the 2/13/2022-3/10/2022 time period (https://gamingcontrolboard.pa.gov/files/public_input/SC_Gaming_Late_public_comment_2-13-22_through_3-10-22.pdf). Please check your spam folder in case Stephen's message or any other legitimate public feedback messages regarding the casino may have inadvertently been flagged as spam by your e-mail software.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Andrew Shaffer
 State College, Pennsylvania

=====

Letter #34

2/20/2022

Pennsylvania Is Addicted to Gambling

Last Sunday's Super Bowl set a record with Americans wagering nearly \$8 billion on the game. This dramatic increase is a direct result of the legalization of sports betting; the matchup between the Rams and the Bengals was the first Super Bowl of the online gambling era.

CA-3.a.

Since online gambling and sports betting are now legal in Pennsylvania, Penn State has begun conducting research on the prevalence and impacts of online gambling. Key findings include that 11.1% of PA residents (i.e. about 1,400,000 million people) participated in online gambling and that 44.6% of PA residents who participated in online gambling (i.e. 4.95% of PA residents / about 643,000 people) exhibited at least one sign of gambling addiction.

Most research on gambling is funded by the gambling industry and is subject to conflicts of interest. Penn State's report is no exception – its background notes that “[t]he funding for this report is provided by law through the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board [PGCB] from revenues of the interactive gaming licensees.” The report unsurprisingly stops short of saying it is problematic for nearly 5% of the state's population to be addicted to online gambling, and it says nothing about the human or economic costs of gambling addiction on the individuals, families and communities that are affected.

Our government officials themselves are addicted to gambling because of the tax revenue that it generates – the report notes early on that online gambling “generated over \$372 million in direct gaming taxes” in Fiscal Year 2020-21. It does not detail that the owners of the online gambling sites keep a additional 85%-625% of the amount that they pay in taxes for themselves depending on the type of gambling that is taking place. Every dollar of that money is extracted from our state's economy and potentially redirected away from making productive economic investments or meeting citizens' immediate needs.

To make matters worse, our state leadership is aggressively pushing to increase the prevalence of gambling by opening more casinos. Just as an addict often needs increasingly frequent and powerful “hits” to experience the same rush that they felt at first, our leadership is approving more and more casinos despite the fact that they no longer provide the surge of tax revenue that is being sought. A 33% increase from 12 to 16 casinos during the past two years has increased overall Pennsylvania casino revenues by only 3.6%. Further increases in gambling tax revenues will only come by getting more citizens addicted to gambling.

The latest location being considered for a casino is our community's Nittany Mall. The casino industry is like a drug dealer and our citizens and elected officials are their users; the only way to stop this cycle of addiction before we hit rock bottom is for people who care about our community to stage an intervention. Please e-mail your opposition to the proposed Nittany Mall Casino to the PGCB at boardclerk@pa.gov and put “Nittany Mall Casino” in the subject of your message.

*Andrew Shaffer,
State College*

<https://www.statecollege.com/letters-dont-let-mall-casino-further-pa-s-gambling-addiction-bypassing-normal-government-processes-flushing-democracy/>

Letter #35

3/2/2022

What is PSU's position on the proposed casino?

The Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board (PGCB) recently approved the license for the Parx Casino Shippensburg near Shippensburg University despite significant community opposition. The leaders at Shippensburg University did not share their opinions about that casino with the PGCB before the vote on the casino license took place. Will Penn State's leaders also remain silent while a casino that is opposed by an 8 to 1 margin in its own community is approved for development at the Nittany Mall?

The proposed casino at the Nittany Mall would significantly impact Penn State for the next several decades. Penn State's leaders should publicly address their assessment of these impacts:

1. Would a nearby casino positively or negatively impact student grade point averages and graduation rates?
2. Would a nearby casino make the university more or less attractive as an educational choice for prospective Penn State students and their families?
3. Would a nearby casino improve or worsen the average student debt of Penn State students?
4. Would a nearby casino support Penn State's sporting and cultural programs or compete with them?
5. How would a nearby casino impact Penn State's rankings compared to other schools?

Penn State's leaders and area residents can send their thoughts about these questions to the PGCB by e-mailing boardclerk@pa.gov and putting "Nittany Mall Casino" in the title of their e-mail. Please submit your opposition to the proposed casino while there is still time to make a difference!

Andrew Shaffer, State College

<https://www.centredaily.com/opinion/letters-to-the-editor/article258915048.html>

Letter #36

3/3/2022

Casino sets a bad example

Children watch adults with keen interest. As an educator and parent, I understand how closely children observe and learn from the adults in their lives. They want to know how we think and why we make the decisions we do. If a gambling casino is approved for our community, how are we adults going to explain this to children? What will a child think when they learn about their grandparent's or older sibling's addiction to gambling that has been fostered and supported by a local casino?

The children are watching, I can assure you. Today's children are very informed and aware of societal issues, in ways my generation never was. The message we are conveying to the children in our community if we condone a gambling casino in our community is this: promoting addictive behavior is OK and exploiting weakness is legitimate.

I can still recall how it slowly dawned on me during my preteen years that some of the adults in my family struggled with addiction. The sadness and helplessness I felt about their pain and suffering is something I can never forget. This experience motivates me to do well by children by showing them things that are worth aspiring to, such as mental wellbeing.

Children put their trust in the adults who care for them. That's us – all of us. Let's come together and insist that the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board put the wellbeing of children first, today and always. Please e-mail boardclerk@pa.gov to let the board members know that a casino should not be approved for our community. Make your voice heard loud and clear: a casino does not belong in State College.

*Anne Elise Burgevin
Pennsylvania Furnace*

<https://www.statecollege.com/letters-pa-senate-districts-make-no-sense-toomeys-charade-casino-a-bad-example-be-honest-about-corporate-taxes-useful-idiots/>

Letter #37**3/4/2022****Casino silence from Penn State equals consent**

Over 400 public comments on the proposed casino in College Township are already posted on the College Township website at collegetownship.org. Hundreds of area residents opposing the Nittany Mall casino have already e-mailed their input to the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board (PGCB) at boardclerk@pa.gov. Many of those comments of casino opposition strongly emphasize the casino's proximity to the Penn State campus as a major detractor that will also be a major distractor for the students of Penn State.

Has Penn State's leadership or the board of trustees spoken out publicly as to whether or not they support or oppose the casino? Absolutely not. Do you think they plan to do so? Not a chance. The university's continuing silence on this subject clearly indicates their consent and their support of the casino's license application being approved by the PGCB later this spring.

Due to legal challenges by the non-winning bidder, the vote to approve or deny the casino's license will not happen before the PGCB meets on May 18. Do not let this problem of the university's continuing silence be passed to the incoming president to solve. You can e-mail the Office of the President now at president@psu.edu. The board of trustees can be reached at bot@psu.edu. Are they hoping to hear from you? Not hardly. When you e-mail the PGCB, please consider including Penn State's leadership mentioned above as cc: addressees. Not everyone in Happy Valley can be kept silent by them. Penn State's own silence equates to their consent.

Daniel Materna, Howard

<https://www.centredaily.com/opinion/letters-to-the-editor/article259011288.html>

Letter #38**3/5/2022****An Open Letter to Penn State President Eric Barron**

Dear President Barron,

I am writing today to urge you to integrate college gambling education and prevention efforts into existing Penn State programs about alcohol, drugs and other risky behaviors.

Seventy-five percent of college students gambled during the past year (whether legally or illegally, on campus or off). While the vast majority of those old enough to legally gamble can do so responsibly, the most recent research estimates that 6% of college students in the U.S. have a serious gambling problem that can result in psychological difficulties, unmanageable debt and failing grades.

Higher education has responded vigorously to alcohol-related problems. Nearly all U.S. colleges and universities have policies on student alcohol use; however, only 22% have a formal policy on gambling. Those without policies in place have the responsibility to inform students about the risks of excessive gambling and to provide recovery-oriented measures. Now is the time for Penn State to meet that challenge and implement a formal policy on gambling.

Increased awareness of high rates of binge drinking has led to the development of numerous prevention programs. Working together, we can address gambling-related harms on and off campus, educate our college students on how to make responsible decisions about gambling and help those students struggling with gambling addiction.

I encourage you to visit collegegambling.org, which was developed by the National Center for Responsible Gaming and provides campus administrators and college health professionals with examples for promoting campus-wide awareness of college gambling.

Now is also the time for Penn State to speak out publicly as to whether Penn State University supports the approval or the denial of the casino license application for the proposed Nittany Mall casino in College Township. [The township's website](#) includes over four hundred public comments from area residents in Happy Valley. Each of them e-mailed that casino-related feedback to the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board (PGCB) at boardclerk@pa.gov.

Penn State should do the same immediately by providing the PGCB with the university's position regarding the recommended approval or denial of the casino's license application. It is time to end the policy of silence Penn State has continually demonstrated regarding the proposed casino. Hundreds of our community members have expressed their opposition to the casino while emphasizing the potential negative impacts of a casino being available 24/7 near the main University Park campus of Penn State.

Thank you for your consideration of this important and growing issue. Your leadership in voicing Penn State's support of or opposition to the proposed casino at Nittany Mall would be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

*Daniel Materna,
Howard*

<https://www.statecollege.com/letters-whats-psus-position-on-casino-exclude-no-one-from-human-rights-gts-political-nonsense/>

Letter #39

Embracing State College casino

So many of us in the State College area are so excited for the proposed casino. My wife and I travel with many other couples to PA and NJ casinos. Now we can stay closer to home and have our friends come here. People don't realize that anyone can gamble on their phones and devices 24/7. As far as we can see there are 8 to 1 in favor of a casino. Our silence does mean that we are in favor of a casino and our silence speaks louder. Let's keep the revenue here.

Dante Englebright, State College

<https://www.centredaily.com/opinion/letters-to-the-editor/article259180428.html>

Letter #40

Will Penn State Leaders Speak Out About Casino?

Dear President Barron,

On February 18, 2020, you conducted an interview about sports gambling on WPSU. During [this interview](#) (quoted comments begin at 22:28), you stated the following:

"Students are very enthusiastic about sports, and very enthusiastic about Penn State sports. So you worry about whether or not a student might get in trouble, that the tuition dollar just got placed on a bet and they don't get to finish [their degree]. Hopefully it's not a common occurrence. But what I learned from the two individuals that I interviewed is the addiction rate in the normal population is about 1-2%. So there's sort of this sense that here's this big revenue

generator, and the problem part of it is 1-2% of the population. **But they said in the college age population, the addiction rate is closer to 6%. So this suggests a certain amount of vulnerability with youth, or with the interest and the tie to our school or something like that, and so this is something to worry about I think."**

Additionally, you previously asked the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board (PGCB) to impose a two-year moratorium on sports betting because you were concerned that it would harm the integrity of college sports. According to The Morning Call, you stated that **"Sources looking to influence or gain an unfair advantage in wagering on collegiate sporting events occurring in Pennsylvania will be overwhelmingly 'local' to Pennsylvania,"** and **"The absence of financial compensation for amateur athletes creates an opportunity for inappropriate influence..."**

However, now that former Penn State Trustee Ira Lubert is proposing to develop a casino with a sports book at the Nittany Mall, your office has gone strangely silent about the issues of sports betting and gambling addiction. Multiple people in our community have privately reached out to the Penn State Board of Trustees requesting that the university take a position on the casino, but every request has been rebuffed. Subsequently, multiple open letters have been published on this topic ().

Youth is not the only risk factor for gambling addiction; those who live within 10 miles of a casino have twice the rate of gambling addiction as those who do not. The proposed location of the new casino less than 5 miles away from Penn State's campus therefore makes this proposed casino an especially dangerous threat to our community. This is why nearly 40 letters to the editor have been published in opposition to the casino in the Centre Daily Times and on StateCollege.com since the beginning of 2021, and over 400 of the approximately 450 public comments submitted to the PGCB from our community oppose the casino.

Will you conclude your term as Penn State's president by speaking out to protect our community from the harms that a nearby land-based casino would bring? Or will you and the Penn State Board of Trustees abandon your responsibility to protect the Penn State community because this casino's developer is a former trustee?

Sincerely,

*Andrew Shaffer,
State College*

31 Comments Follow This Letter:

John Pitterle

We do not want a casino in this region. It should be a no-brainer. Casino owners don't need to make lots of money at the expense of people in our area. A casino would bring undesirable gambling problems and other problematic issues to this region. We do not need this. We do not want some people to get addicted to gambling and have personal, financial, and family problems. There are numerous negative reasons we do not want a casino to come to Nittany Mall. In a nutshell, it would be harmful to our community.

Ann Nijnol

If this casino were to go in, we as a community will not go silent. Everything is outlined perfectly in every letter disputing it being put in. For this casino to even still be considered, that just shows the sole purpose is to prey on the community for financial gain.

Barry Kroeker

Public sentiment is running 8-1 in opposition to the casino. Now is the time to get out in front of this parade and make a positive difference in this community.

Sonya Woods

I live 10 minutes from the Nittany Mall and I truly believe a putting a casino there would hurt both the residents and the students. The community is clearly opposed to the casino so I hope our leaders will hear that and take action.

Jane Sleigh

We oppose bringing a casino into this community. There is nothing to gain from it on a local level much to lose.

Peggy Terry

This entire project reeks of greed and total disregard for the well-being of the community and its members. We must oppose this development.

Dawn Huebner Vanden Heuvel

I'm opposed to bringing a casino to State College. Not only will it be harmful for some individuals, it brings a negative feeling to our community as a college town.

Amy Moore

Please take note of the surrounding commercial businesses. Primarily discount stores. This is obviously our market area. There have to be more ethical alternatives for the state to make money than to prey on those who are already struggling to make ends meet. A casino is the last thing our area needs.

Sarah Christian

Please keep the casino out of this town. No amount of money is worth the harm it will bring not just to individuals but to the community as a whole.

Mary Curran

The community has spoken and we do not want a casino at Nittany Mall. The chance of winning seduces people into believing that good luck is on their side, but we know the casino always wins and the hard-earned money of working people fills their coffers. Don't fall for their con State College.

Dorothy Sandusky

Please listen to Mr. Shaffer. We don't need a casino in our town. Mr. Lubert said it will make State College grow. It is not the kind of growth we need. Maybe you should do a survey with Penn State parents. President Barron please take a stance again this.

Kristen Boccumini Thwing

A casino would devastate State College, PA and, especially, the surrounding rural communities. No good has ever come of one other than to fill the pockets of the owners feeding off the hopes and addictions of those who succumb to their marketing lies of quick riches. Casinos foster unhealthy addictions, crime, prostitution, and deplete the surrounding areas of wealth leaving it desert dry just like Atlantic City, which at one point was an attractive, fun, touristy beach town for families is now desolate other than the blingy caasinos themselves, leaving locals oppressed and stuck in generational cycles of poverty and drug addiction. There are many other ways to provide jobs, by bringing in other industries that support progressive infrastructure, rather than stealing from locals and town tourists despite flashy

appeal. If tourist/alumni/etc, visit town, this will lure their financial support away from local businesses, which will also drain the town financially, and instead fill the pockets of the rich business owner who lives states away and cares nothing of this area or of the people who live here and the dilapidating effect this will have on their environment and lives. I'm happy to support certain business here, but NOT the casino business, which I adamantly proclaim must be taken elsewhere or no where at all.

Christy Laforce

Having had a relative with a gambling addiction almost lose home and destroy his marriage, we too oppose this casino. With community opposition so high, how can you in good conscience, not step up?

Ray Bilger

Support the casino! I live near the mall and would heartily welcome Bally's. It would help save the struggling mall and prevent it from being turned into more ugly student housing, further fueling the decline of this end of town. You see lots of unsupported statistics in these letters to the editor and their followers in the comments section. Supporters need to voice their support to drown out the vocal minority. Voice that support via email to boardclerk@pa.gov.

Donna Shaffer

Penn State University states as part of its "Missions and Values" the following:

Discovery - We seek and create new knowledge and understanding,....for the benefit of our communities, society, and the environment.

Responsibility - We act responsibly, and we are accountable for our decisions, actions, and their consequences.

Community - We work together for the betterment of our university, the communities we serve, and the world.

Failure to oppose a casino at the Nittany Mall is inconsistent with these statements. Please speak out for the benefit of the university and our community by opposing this development.

Austin Kirk Heller

I want to add my voice (again) to those who oppose having a casino here in State College and the numerous problems that it would cause. It is my hope that President Barron and the Penn State Board of Trustees will join us by asking the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board to deny the license for the proposed casino at the Nittany Mall.

Compiled below are 37 letters to the editor opposing the casino. They provide good reasons why we do not want a casino at the Nittany Mall. Ordinarily, I wouldn't do this, as I feel it's overbearing. However, one thing I've observed, as the deadline looms closer, is my inability to lend proper time to voicing my opposition. My days are very busy, raising a family, working, investing, maintaining a household, etc. There isn't much time left at the end of the day for other pursuits. Many of us are in the same situation. Thusly, I voice it now:

1 - <https://www.centredaily.com/.../let.../article189467384.html>

2 - <https://www.centredaily.com/.../let.../article248445220.html>

3 - <https://www.statecollege.com/letter-make-your-voice.../>

4 - <https://www.centredaily.com/.../let.../article253387953.html>

- 5 - <https://www.statecollege.com/letters-continue-to-make.../>
- 6 - <https://www.centredaily.com/.../let.../article253722493.html>
- 7 - <https://www.centredaily.com/.../opn.../article253972293.html>
- 8 - <https://www.centredaily.com/.../let.../article254046583.html>
- 9 - <https://www.centredaily.com/.../let.../article254058113.html>
- 10 - <https://www.centredaily.com/.../let.../article254174503.html>
- 11 - <https://www.statecollege.com/letter-resolve-to-stop.../>
- 12 - <https://www.centredaily.com/.../let.../article254256278.html>
- 13 - <https://www.centredaily.com/.../let.../article254432253.html>
- 14 - <https://www.statecollege.com/letters-casino-could-harm.../>
- 15 - <https://www.centredaily.com/.../let.../article254798312.html>
- 16 - <https://www.centredaily.com/.../let.../article254858787.html>
- 17, 18 - <https://www.statecollege.com/letters-anderson-highly.../>
- 19 - <https://www.centredaily.com/.../let.../article255472946.html>
- 20 - <https://www.statecollege.com/letter-casino-will-be.../>
- 21 - <https://www.centredaily.com/.../let.../article256219847.html>
- 22 - <https://www.centredaily.com/.../let.../article256278107.html>
- 23 - <https://www.lockhaven.com/.../objection-to-gambling-casino/>
- 24 - <https://www.statecollege.com/letter-save-the-last.../>
- 25 - <https://www.centredaily.com/.../let.../article256905957.html>
- 26 - <https://www.centredaily.com/.../let.../article257164207.html>
- 27 - <https://www.centredaily.com/.../let.../article257283077.html>
- 28 - <https://www.centredaily.com/.../let.../article257434472.html>

29 - <https://www.statecollege.com/letter-would-a-casino-bring.../>

30 - <https://www.centredaily.com/.../let.../article257961018.html>

31 - <https://www.centredaily.com/.../let.../article258003968.html>

32 - <https://www.centredaily.com/.../let.../article258164893.html>

33 - <https://www.statecollege.com/letters-dont-let-mall.../>

34 - <https://www.centredaily.com/.../let.../article258915048.html>

35 - <https://www.statecollege.com/letters-pa-senate-districts.../>

36 - <https://www.centredaily.com/.../let.../article259011288.html>

37 - <https://www.statecollege.com/letters-whats-psus-position.../>

Brandon Daubenspeck

For the well-being of the university students, the vulnerable addicts, and the state college community at large; I urge those with the capacity to make decisions on the matter of the casino to strongly consider all the ramifications of allowing this establishment to take root in our community. Many in the community are clearly opposed to this business and the undesirable consequences it brings with it, and we are convinced that the space we have could be better utilized to the benefit of the whole community instead of those who seek to exploit it.

Cristina Houtz

President Barron and Board of Trustee members, please weigh in on the proposed casino. Happy Valley will not be a better place for having a casino and would devalue all that is good about our community and University.

Leigh Pitterle

A casino will not benefit our community. Addiction to gambling and alcohol are destructive to our families.

Brea Asbury

Our family is opposed to the addition of a casino at the Nittany Mall. Let's use our time and resources and positions for things that BUILD UP individuals, families, and communities instead of tearing them down! Let us work for what is good, right, and noble for this generation and the ones to come.

Sincerely,

Brea Asbury, State College

Jed Neilson

Please do not put a casino in Centre county. Gambling and lotteries are attractive to governments as an alternate form of raising revenue without officially raising taxes, but they often end up disproportionately 'taxing' lower-income citizens. In addition to being a regressive tax on the poor, they bring many other undesirable consequences to communities.

Patty Reddington

I have said it before and at the expense of repeating myself, I will say it again. I see absolutely no possible good outcome from having a gambling casino here at the Nittany Mall. It may lead to more business, but what kind of business? Loan sharks, pawn shops, additional law enforcement? Recreational gambling in and of itself is not a bad thing, but unfortunately I believe that more people will suffer from this casino than will benefit. Too many of the patrons of these establishments are not in a financial position to be gambling. Please do not allow a casino here in Happy Valley. The almighty dollar has already forever changed the ambiance and appearance of our downtown State College Area, let's not let the promise of more money for the area further corrupt the very reasons many of us continue to live here.

Jackie Bonomo

I live within a mile of the Nittany Mall in Lemont. I also formerly managed a bookstore in the Mall. There are other, better businesses or community minded projects that can use that space for the benefit of our community. A gambling casino will only harm community members and is a negative influence on students and families. I see no positive gain to be had and neither do an overwhelming number of like-minded local citizens. Get rid of the casino idea. Period.

Melanie Harding

The cost of the destruction to individuals, families, and yes, even businesses in the area is too high for any believed benefit. Even though some might think a casino would be great for business development, what kind of businesses would develop as a byproduct of a casino? It would certainly increase the need for the social services industries, such as rehabs, counseling, addictions groups etc... to grow substantially. But, the social services resources in Centre County, including I believe, Penn State's, are already overwhelmed with more need than can be served. Penn State works hard to promote an image of working together for excellence, for students and community alike. I hope they put substance behind the image of "We are One" excellence. Adding their voice of leadership to discouraging a destructive force such as a casino would be a good step. And if they wanted to truly be one step ahead in their leadership, they could suggest innovative, life affirming, achievement oriented business development opportunities in it's place that would lift the quality of life for all in the area.

Anne Burgevin

As an education-focused community we have a standard to uphold for the sake of our children, teens, and young adult students. I urge President Barron and the Board of Trustees to take a stand on this issue and fulfill their mission to its fullest extent. We adults will have difficult explaining to do to our children and students if this casino is okayed. At this juncture, let's taken the higher path and say "no" to addiction and "yes" to education.

Melinda Patterson Amphor

What a sad addition to Centre County a Casino would be. This sadly feels like a powerful, greedy few pushing an agenda. I wish the Penn State Board of Trustees would show some integrity and not shrink before the folly of others. I could not be more displeased with this plan for a casino. So many other ways to bring positive opportunities and jobs to the area.

Holly Junod Grenoble

A casino in this area is not a good idea. It is not a good thing for the community or the university. It promotes a foolish use of money for someone else's gain. Gambling rarely has resulted in anything of value.

Amy Schwab Lloyd

A casino would hurt our community, and I ask that President Barron and the Board of Trustees speak out against it.

Amy Rothrock

Please do not allow a casino to come here. To me, one of the things I love about living here is the family atmosphere-- hiking, nature, athletics and much more. A casino seems to run counter to everything Happy Valley stands for. Please, please reconsider this dreadful plan. Thank you!

Cassie Konkle

I do not think a casino would be good for our community. Instead of spending money supporting local businesses, people will be throwing away their money at a casino. I do not see how this would benefit the community. In addition to taking money away from our community, a casino would increase the incidence of gambling addiction and all of the negative fallout that comes along with addiction, which comes with its own financial burden. I believe a casino would be particularly bad for the college student community. College students already struggle with overindulging in alcohol. The enticement of a nearby gambling establishment would only add another unhealthy pass time for students to engage in.

Justin Collins

I oppose any casino being put into our community. Such an institution would cause students to throw away money and seriously impact their study habits. I urge you to publicly speak out against the proposed casino for the Nittany Mall.

<https://www.statecollege.com/letters-pa-needs-better-education-funding-climate-change-security-risk-voter-suppression-will-psu-leaders-speak-out-on-casino/>

Letter #41

Opposed to casino

We want to express our opposition to the proposed casino in the Nittany Mall in State College. Uncontrolled gambling has caused tremendous heartache in too many families. Too often, it's the folks who can least afford it who do it.

With Penn State University just a few miles away, students would likely also be gambling and may start lifelong gambling addictions. Too many of these students would lack judgment as to when to stop before losing too much money.

It would be helpful if Penn State administrators, faculty and trustees who also oppose the casino for the sake of the students would share their views. Please submit opposition feedback regarding the casino to the PGCB by emailing boardclerk@pa.gov with "Nittany Mall Casino" in the title of each message.

We would be most grateful not to have a casino at the Nittany Mall! There are much better ways to raise taxes and supply jobs for College Township.

Don and Peggy Myers, Spring Mills

<https://www.centredaily.com/opinion/letters-to-the-editor/article259416274.html>

Lloyd, Linda (PGCB)

From: Michelle Campos <michelle.u.campos@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, March 19, 2022 8:36 AM
To: president@psu.edu
Cc: GB, Board Clerk
Subject: [External] Concerning the proposed Nittany Mall casino
Attachments: Barron_anti-casino.pdf

***ATTENTION:** This email message is from an external sender. Do not open links or attachments from unknown sources. To report suspicious email, forward the message as an attachment to CWOPA_SPAM@pa.gov.*

Dear President Barron,

I am writing in response to a recent open letter published on StateCollege.com urging you to speak out against the proposed casino at the Nittany Mall. I would like to add my voice as a new faculty member, educator, parent, and community member.

We moved to State College in summer 2020, lured by the university's commitment to research and education and because we saw Happy Valley as a quality community in which to raise our two school-age children. Last summer, my elderly mother joined us in order to have more support in this stage of her life, and she was likewise charmed by the pastoral setting, public safety, and community stability that we enjoy here.

In December, I was shocked to learn that the College Township board had approved an investor's proposal to take over part of the Nittany Mall to build a casino. As I noted at the time in my email to the PA Gaming Commission opposing this move, the mall houses a county-sponsored senior activity center (which my mother attends regularly to play games and socialize), and it also serves as an informal exercise track for families and individuals during the cold winter months. Placing a casino there would ruin the community functions of the mall and directly endanger those populations that regularly use it.

More broadly, a casino anywhere in State College and the surrounding hamlets would pose a significant and irreversible threat to our community's public health and social welfare. As I read the minutes of the College Township meetings where this proposal was discussed and approved, I was puzzled to see that there was no *substantive* engagement with the very real social costs that this casino would impose on the city and its residents. Instead, the questions posed were entirely banal, including what kind of landscaping would be provided, the size of the parking lot, and how large the entry overhang would be.

Why did the township officials not raise pertinent, evidence-based questions about the impact of the casino on our community? Surely a town that houses the flagship state university could harness the power of scholarly research to better understand the risks and challenges of bringing a casino into the community. Since the township did not do so, I urge you as the university president, with a tremendous responsibility not only to the students, staff, and faculty of Penn State and their families, but also to the surrounding community, to respond to the evidence and oppose this casino.

Although this is far from my field of expertise (I am a historian of the Middle East), I spent a couple of hours on my Saturday morning reviewing the scholarly literature on casinos and their economic and social costs to the communities in which they are built. The literature is very uneven in time, scope, and method, but the overall

assessment is clear and demands that we oppose this proposed casino for the short-, medium-, and long-term health of our community, our students, and our collective future.

The five main points are bolded, with relevant quotes and citations following.

1 – The Economic Benefits are Minimal to Nonexistent

While casinos are lucrative investments for the owners [due to the laws of probability, i.e., the house always wins], the wider economic benefits that are promised have not materialized in communities across the country. (There are possibly greater economic benefits in regions that allow multiple casinos to enter or in casino resorts due to scale and market size, but *not* in single-casino locations.)

“During the campaigning stage of the legalization of gaming, tourism development and economic growth were used as the “hook” for residents’ affirmative votes. As indicated by Hsu (1998), the economic impact of a riverboat casino in southeastern Iowa was limited. Economic indexes showed that the economic conditions of those communities seemed to be a reflection of the overall state economy, not the presence of the riverboat casino.”

- Hsu, Cathy HC. "Residents' support for legalized gaming and perceived impacts of riverboat casinos: Changes in five years." *Journal of Travel Research* 38.4 (2000): 390-395.

2 – The Socioeconomic Costs Far Outweigh Any Benefits

There is a clear assessment that the social welfare, public health, and community-born costs of operating a casino are far higher than the minimal economic benefit they bring. Notably, these costs are *not* born by the casino investors nor by the casino customers, but by all of us.

“Based on available numbers, costs [of allowing casinos] exceed benefits by a factor of more than 3:1.” This includes the social costs of crime, business and employment costs, suicide, illness, social service costs, direct regulatory costs, family costs, and abused dollars.

- Grinols, Earl L. *Gambling in America: Costs and benefits*. Cambridge University Press, 2004.

“The weight of the empirical evidence suggests that casinos do in fact impose negative social costs on surrounding communities, most notably, an increased prevalence of property and violent crime.”

- Kearney, Melissa Schettini. "The economic winners and losers of legalized gambling." *National Tax Journal* 58.2 (2005): 281-302.

“Upon careful review, the overwhelming body of research, indicates legalized gambling to impose more costs than any perceived benefit. In fact, tabulation of all external costs borne by society, proves the cost exceed the benefits of gambling by a ratio of two-to-one.”

- Barretta, Todd C. *The direct, induced, and external costs and benefits of legalized casino gambling*. Quinnipiac University, 2004.

3 – Specific Social Problems [Crime, Bankruptcy, Suicide, Compulsive/Pathological Gambling] Increase with Casinos

There is empirical correlation of statistically significant higher levels of a number of specific social problems in casino locales – most notably, crime, bankruptcy, suicide, and mental health gambling issues that contribute to additional ills such as domestic abuse. These are not community “fears” or “anecdotal evidence,” but widespread and documented problems.

“The results suggest that the effect on crime is low shortly after a casino opens, and grows over time. Roughly 8% of crime in casino counties in 1996 was attributable to casinos, costing the average adult \$75 per year.”

- Earl L. Grinols, David B. Mustard; Casinos, Crime, and Community Costs. *The Review of Economics and Statistics* 2006; 88 (1): 28–45.

Crime includes FBI index 1 violent and nonviolent crimes [aggravated assault, murder, rape, robbery; larceny, burglary, auto theft], as well as non-Index I crimes [forgery, fraud,].

- Grinols, Earl L. *Gambling in America: Costs and benefits*. Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Casino counties have 18-35% higher rates of bankruptcy than non-casino counties. Suicide rates of compulsive gamblers are 5-10x higher than the population at large.

- Grinols, Earl L. *Gambling in America: Costs and benefits*. Cambridge University Press, 2004.

“This study enumerates a prevalence rate of at-risk, problem, and pathological gamblers combined to be between 7.3% and 8.4% of the adult population.”

- Chhabra, Deepak. "Estimating benefits and costs of casino gambling in Iowa, United States." *Journal of Travel Research* 46.2 (2007): 173-182.

“These unintended negative consequences can include gambling disorders, a term used to encompass a spectrum of problems experienced along the continuum that incorporates the constructs of problem and pathological gambling; family dysfunction and domestic violence including spousal and child abuse; youth and underage gambling; alcohol and other drug problems; psychiatric conditions including major depression, bipolar disorder, antisocial personality, anxiety, and attention deficit disorder; suicide, suicidal ideation, and suicide attempts; significant financial troubles including bankruptcy, loss of employment, and poverty as a direct result of wagering; and criminal behavior ranging from prostitution and theft to drug trafficking and homicide.”

- Shaffer, Howard J., and David A. Korn. "Gambling and related mental disorders: A public health analysis." *Annual review of public health* 23.1 (2002): 171-212.

4 – Seniors and Low-Income Households are at risk

The consensus of the scholarship is that gambling disproportionately attracts lower-income populations including seniors on fixed incomes. Likewise, gambling problems disproportionately affect these classes.

“The most dramatic increase in lifetime gambling occurred in the 65+ age group, from 35% of older adults to 80% . lower-income households spend proportionately more of their money on gambling than higher-income households. Given that some gambling revenue goes to the government (e.g., lotteries), these data encourage the view that gambling expenditures represent a regressive tax. Poverty often is associated with increased financial risk-taking, perhaps because of the psychoeconomics of gambling.”

- Shaffer, Howard J., and David A. Korn. "Gambling and related mental disorders: A public health analysis." *Annual review of public health* 23.1 (2002): 171-212.

5 – Teens and College Students are Particularly Vulnerable

It is no wonder that the investors would like to place their casino near Penn State University, as studies of gambling on other college campuses have found that the vast majority of students have gambled, with significant numbers of them gambling on a regular basis.

Moreover, there are a number of recent studies on teens and college students and the “epidemic” of gambling that outline the clear danger to individual students and to the student body as a whole. Habitual gambling among teens leads to a number of social problems, including alcohol and drug abuse, negative learning outcomes, eating disorders, and more.

“Students from six colleges and universities in five states in the U.S. (New York, New Jersey, Oklahoma, Texas, and Nevada) were surveyed concerning their gambling behavior and the rate of pathological gambling. Type of gambling varied by state, with students in the northeast and Nevada gambling more than students in Oklahoma and Texas. Over 90% of males and 82% of females had gambled. One third of the males and 15% of females gambled once a week or more.”

- Lesieur, Henry R., et al. "Gambling and pathological gambling among university students." *Addictive behaviors* 16.6 (1991): 517-527.

“College students from 2 Minnesota universities were surveyed about their gambling involvement. Gambling was reported to be a common experience, with 87% having participated at least once in the previous year.”

- Winters, K. C., Bengston, P., Door, D., & Stinchfield, R. (1998). Prevalence and risk factors of problem gambling among college students. *Psychology of Addictive Behaviors*, 12(2), 127–135.

“Long term trends, based on findings from twenty independent prevalence studies surveying middle and high school youth in North America, suggest that within the past year two out of three legally underage youth have

gambled for money. In the United States and Canada as many as 15.3 million 12–17 year olds have been gambling with or without adult awareness or approval, and 2.2 million of these are experiencing serious gambling-related problems... Trends between 1984–1999 indicate a substantial increase in the proportion of juveniles who report gambling within the past year, and a parallel increase in the proportion of juveniles reporting serious gambling-related problems.”

- Jacobs, Durand F. "Juvenile gambling in North America: An analysis of long term trends and future prospects." *Journal of Gambling Studies* 16.2 (2000): 119-152.

“The odds of being identified as a probable pathological gambler was high for men, those indicating a positive parental history for gambling problems, regular (weekly plus) users of illicit drugs, and those with poor grades.”

- Winters, K. C., Bengston, P., Door, D., & Stinchfield, R. (1998). Prevalence and risk factors of problem gambling among college students. *Psychology of Addictive Behaviors*, 12(2), 127–135.

“Students identified as problem gamblers, compared with other students, were significantly more likely to be heavy drinkers, report negative consequences of alcohol consumption, and be regular tobacco and marijuana users. Problem gambling was related to binge eating and greater use of weight-control efforts. University athletes were also found to have significantly greater problem gambling rates than nonathletes.”

- Engwall, Douglas, Robert Hunter, and Marvin Steinberg. "Gambling and other risk behaviors on university campuses." *Journal of American College Health* 52.6 (2004): 245-256.
- Derevensky, Jeffrey L. *Teen gambling: Understanding a growing epidemic*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2012.

For all of these reasons, President Barron, I urge you to speak out against this proposed casino that so clearly goes against the interests of Penn State students, staff, faculty, and families and community members in State College and the surrounding area.

Sincerely,

Michelle Campos

Lloyd, Linda (PGCB)

From: Olson, Stephen <sto113@psu.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, March 22, 2022 2:35 PM
To: GB, Board Clerk
Subject: [External] Opposition to Nittany Mall Casino

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To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to express my firm opposition to the PGCB's licensing of the proposed casino in State College. My primary objection is to the business model of a casino, which is predatory in a way that exploits addiction, as do heroin and opioids. When someone succumbs to an addiction, they inflict the consequences on themselves as well as their family and community. The introduction of a venue for something known to be addictive, be it a casino, opium den or crack house, therefore threatens the welfare and character of the surrounding community- regardless of how much revenue it creates for the owners, or local government. Please do not license a casino in or near our community.

Respectfully,

Stephen Olson
Boalsburg, PA

Lloyd, Linda (PGCB)

From: Chris Homan <choman214@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 24, 2022 10:10 AM
To: GB, Board Clerk
Subject: [External] Nittany Mall Casino

***ATTENTION:** This email message is from an external sender. Do not open links or attachments from unknown sources. To report suspicious email, forward the message as an attachment to CWOPA_SPAM@pa.gov.*

I do not want a casino opening in Centre County.
I do not want gaming machines in Centre County.
Ronald C. Homan

Lloyd, Linda (PGCB)

From: Andrew McKinnon <mckinnon118@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 24, 2022 1:53 PM
To: GB, Board Clerk
Subject: [External] casino at nittany mall
Attachments: casino 3-23-22.pdf

***ATTENTION:** This email message is from an external sender. Do not open links or attachments from unknown sources. To report suspicious email, forward the message as an attachment to CWOPA_SPAM@pa.gov.*

Please see the attached comment in opposition to the proposed casino at the Nittany Mall.

Thank you,
Andrew McKinnon

Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board

March 24, 2022

Re: Proposed Casino at Nittany Mall

To Whom It May Concern,

I strongly oppose the proposed casino. Considering the current rapid pace of growth and development in the Centre Region, any major project including a casino needs to be weighed against the values of the community. As a long time resident of the Centre Region, I share with many others the value of a healthy natural environment – clean air and water, lots of open green space, abundant forests, and aesthetically pleasing landscapes – as well as a robust social and cultural environment comprised of abundant walking paths and bike lanes, clean public transportation, small independent businesses, parks, and institutions that foster healthy personal and community growth.

The community finds itself at a crossroad of values: will we choose a path that promotes personal growth, a healthy ecosystem, and meaningful relationships with others as well as with the natural world? Or will we take the darker road that risks – through potential gambling addiction, increased traffic, pollution, construction, and other means – the health of individuals, communities, and local ecosystems?

Please do not allow development of the proposed casino to proceed.

Sincerely,

Andrew McKinnon

Andrew McKinnon

118 East Blade Drive
Pa. Furnace, PA 16865
814-222-0101

Lloyd, Linda (PGCB)

From: Bob Bauer <rjbauer@earthlink.net>
Sent: Sunday, March 13, 2022 4:45 PM
To: GB, Board Clerk
Subject: [External] Re: casino

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To the board members,

NO CASINO IS NEEDED. LEAVE THE MALL ALONE. LET THE WANTERS DRIVE SOMEPLACE ELSE.

Robert J. Bauer

PSP Trooper Retired

Lloyd, Linda (PGCB)

From: Bob Bauer <rjbauer@earthlink.net>
Sent: Monday, March 28, 2022 4:19 PM
To: GB, Board Clerk
Subject: [External] Re: casino

ATTENTION: This email message is from an external sender. Do not open links or attachments from unknown sources. To report suspicious email, forward the message as an attachment to CWOPA_SPAM@pa.gov.

Did you all make up your minds to put the casino in the Nittany Mall ???

I know you all will not respond so have a good day.

Robert J. Bauer

From: Daniel Materna <sailordan76@verizon.net>
Sent: Monday, April 11, 2022 6:59 PM
To: CTCouncil; mike@centrecountypa.gov; mark@centrecountypa.gov;
sdershem@centrecountypa.gov; Adam Brumbaugh
Cc: Jennifer Snyder
Subject: Nittany Mall casino opposition - now a national news story!

Dear members of the College Township Council, College Township Manager, and Centre County Commissioners,

Here is the link to today's national news story regarding the proposed casino at Nittany Mall.

[Penn State Casino Opposition Calls on University to Reject Bally's Project](#)

Best regards,
Dan Materna



[News](#) > [Regulation](#)

Penn State Casino Opposition Calls on University to Reject Bally's Project

Posted on: April 11, 2022, 02:54h.

Last updated on: April 11, 2022, 06:01h.



Devin O'Connor

[Read More](#)

The proposed Penn State casino near the campus has generated stern opposition from the local State College community. But one voice that hasn't yet weighed in on the matter is the most influential entity in all of Centre County: the school itself.



A rendering of the proposed Penn State casino from the Bally's Corporation. The casino, which would be located just miles from the university's campus, is facing much opposition from local residents. (Image: Bally's Corporation)

Bally's has proposed spending \$123 million to reimagine the former Macy's department store at the

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State's main campus in University Park.

Bally's acquired the rights to the satellite casino by partnering with Ira Lubert, a Penn State University alumnus and former board trustee. Lubert was permitted to bid on the Category 4 auction round in September of 2020 because of his previous ownership position in the Valley Forge Casino Resort. Lubert won the auction with a \$10 million tender.

Lubert and Bally's are targeting the former Macy's for a casino with up to 750 slot machines, 30 table games, and a sportsbook. However, the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board (PGCB) has fielded hundreds of letters in opposition to the casino. Letters in opposition have far outweighed letters of support. The state typically fields such community input when considering new land-based casinos.

Local Seeks University Comment

The PGCB held a [public input hearing](#) regarding the proposed Nittany Mall casino in August. The College Township Council unanimously approved a land development plan from Bally's to use the mall space for gaming in September.

The Bally's team must still go before the PGCB to present its full plan for the 94,000-square-foot casino before the state gaming regulatory agency will vote on issuing the casino operator the Category 4 license. No date for such a presentation has yet been announced.

Daniel M., a resident of nearby Howard, has been a vocal critic of the Bally's Penn State casino plan. He has written letters and op-eds to local media urging others to tell the PGCB to deny Bally's a gaming license. He has also commented on *Casino.org's* coverage of the casino undertaking.

Daniel M. is now calling on Penn State to end its silence on the casino controversy. In a letter addressed to outgoing Penn State University President Eric Barron, the Howard resident contends that the president's silence might mean that he's hoping to pass the provocative issue on to his successor.

“ Regarding this future chaos a casino would bring to our college town, this absolute silence from [Penn State] should not remain in place until after your retirement parties in early May. Please break Penn State University's silence about the casino and speak out,” he said in his letter, as published by *StateCollege.com*.

“Our community’s concern regarding Penn State’s silence about the planned casino will not just fade away, as you may have hoped,” he added.

Successor Might Take Stance

Barron is set to retire effective May 9. His successor — President-elect Dr. Neeli Bendapudi — arrives from the University of Louisville. She plans to be a more outspoken leader when it comes to community affairs.

“The goodness of what comes out of Penn State should first be felt by the community of State College, then the commonwealth, then the country, and then the world. So you will see me quite active in the community,” Dr. Bendapudi said recently.

Bally’s claims plenty of good would come out of its Nittany Mall casino. The Rhode Island-based gaming company projects that the satellite casino would create hundreds of new jobs, generate new local tax revenue, and reinvigorate the desolate mall.

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Last Comment (1)

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Andrew April 11, 2022

Daniel is only one of many in Happy Valley who are calling on Penn State's leadership to speak out against the proposed casino at the Nittany Mall: <https://www.statecollege.com/letters-pa-needs-better-education-funding-climate-change-security-risk-voter-suppression-will-psu-leaders-speak-out-on-casino/>