



BILL WALCZAK
MAYOR *of* BOSTON

July 30, 2013

Mr. Stephen Crosby
Chair, Massachusetts Gaming Commission
84 State Street, 10th Floor
Boston, MA 02109

Dear Mr. Crosby:

The process by which the *Category 1, Region A* license for a resort-style casino in East Boston is being administered leaves the determination of the local agreement between Suffolk Downs and the City of Boston with the current mayor. However, the burden of the implementation of any agreement will be the responsibility of the incoming mayor upon inauguration in January 2014. I believe that there is an inherent problem with this process, and I want to make the Committee aware that, if elected mayor, I will automatically consider whether or not to reopen any established mitigation agreement with all available avenues established by the Commission under *205 CMR 127.00*.

Creating a casino within the city of Boston will affect nearly every aspect of city government and every Bostonian. The impact of the casino will result in myriad changes to our city's infrastructure including roadways and public transit. It also means a major adjustment in how the city currently provides services to its residents and it will require the delivery of new services from city government. The negative effects of the casino on nearby communities will also require mitigation. These facts underscore the impact to the city and its residents of which most are unaware. This is why I want to be on record as stating my intention to review and likely reopen any mitigation agreement negotiated prior to my election as Mayor.

As a person with a long career in public health, I know the social impacts associated with casinos. The consequences of adding a casino can be dire, especially for low-income and working class communities. Low-paying gaming service jobs will not sustain a vibrant community. Beyond this, many studies prove that the economic impact of a casino is negative on a community. The notion that casinos promote local economies are an economic oxymoron -- casinos extract money out of a local economy. We need only look to Detroit, Buffalo and Atlantic City to see how casinos negatively affect local economies.

I am personally recommending that Suffolk County voters oppose the development of a casino and instead look to other uses of the Suffolk Downs property to provide economic development and good jobs. This could include an East Boston Innovation District that boosts our economy with housing, small scale manufacturing, green jobs, and perhaps a prefab housing factory to create good quality and green lower cost housing - not a casino disguised as a theme park. A well-functioning planning agency would have come up with a master plan with alternatives such as these. Boston's residents need to know the alternatives to a casino at Suffolk Downs, and need to be able to vote with that knowledge, which is currently not the case.

It is very clear that this is a flawed process. If the process is allowed to go forward as is, and negotiations are completed before the new mayor takes office, I will use all available legal avenues to significantly amend or revoke the agreement as afforded under *205 CMR 127.00* should I be elected mayor. Our world-class city should not have to settle for the hollow promises and false nirvanas of casinos, when we can build what our communities need and want.

Sincerely,

Bill Walczak
Candidate for Mayor