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Thursday August 9, 2007

Casino arguments from senator aren't believed

Wednesday, August 8, 2007 10:35 AM EDT

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 can be sent to
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Editor's note: This letter was addressed to Senator Patricia Birkholz.

I am sending a copy of this letter to the area newspapers, as I feel you have been taken up with the same gibberish that Michael Jandernoa and the "23 Is Enough" lobby group was infected with a few years ago—when the Grand Rapids Chamber of Commerce, an anti-casino group, hired The Anderson Economic Group to "study" the impact of a casino.

They must be some awfully smart people, because they came up with the following answers: "Every job created by the Gun Lake Casino will take away two jobs in the surrounding area."

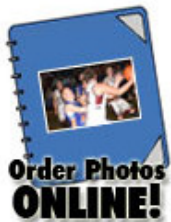
Let's use that as a formula. If the casino hires 1,800 inside jobs that means 3,600 jobs in the surrounding area will be lost, and if the casino created another 1,200 jobs in supply as claimed, that would eliminate another 2,400 jobs, for a grand total of 6,000 jobs lost in the surrounding area.

That's not all. The Anderson Group also found that "over 10 years the casino would bring \$1.2 billion dollars to Allegan County but cost Kent, Ottawa and Barry \$880 million dollars." This was in the newspapers on Oct. 10, 2004; I have the clipping in my files.

The Anderson Group also stated, "Economic analysis after the fact is done by academics." At the time I read and reread that statement and could not find any meaning to it. So, in you believing the Anderson Economic Group, would you please explain what that means in plain English?

No wonder as James Nye stated that "listening to Sen. Birkholz describe her fears about what this would do economically to Grand Rapids, everybody was quite frankly disgusted."

I do not know where you get your information, but I called a few city managers in areas where there are casinos and I stopped at a few on my way to Watersmeet, where I used to spend my summers. In talking with



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business people in restaurants and motels they mostly agreed the casinos brought people to the area and increased their business. Your statement that casinos undercut local businesses is way off base and you know it.

I'm sorry, senator, but your argument doesn't fly.

Senator, with thousand of jobs being lost every month in Michigan, and people leaving the state: I for the life of me cannot understand why you and others oppose this casino, which will put approximately 2,500 to 3,500 people to work and contribute to the state and county. If you people feel this way about gambling, why are you not trying to stop the Battle Creek and Michigan City casinos from being built? I hope you will answer my questions.

Carl N. Swartz
Wayland

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