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Casino scares

In Bonnie Shupe's "Avoid being casino statistic" (Pulse, Aug. 2) she avoided the facts about Indian casinos in Michigan.

Her objections to the Gun Lake casino focused on her doom and gloom scenario of the tribe sinking the West Michigan economy by offering tax-free sales of tobacco, gas, and retail goods. She also suggested the tribe would give away free alcohol.

This is yet another example of critics employing scare tactics as arguments against the casino. Let's look at the many examples of reality here in Michigan. Our state is home to nine Indian tribes who own 17 operating casinos.

That means there's a lot of opportunity to open up tax-free retail outlets to sell a wide variety of goods. I wonder why it hasn't happened just once?

One reason could be limitations to such activities under the law. Another reason is that almost all the tribes signed compacts and tax agreements with Governor Engler that addressed all those possible areas of concern for the state and its residents. Yikes! Sign compacts to address concerns for state and local citizens? Looks like Ms. Shupe and the folks at 23 Is Enough better rethink their position against gaming compacts.

Sooner or later the opposition to this casino isn't going to get away with all these theories and what-if scenarios. Come forth with proof or hard evidence that these types of awful activities have happened in just one other place in Michigan that has experienced an Indian casino.

However, if Ms. Shupe is genuinely concerned, she should contact her state senator, Ken Sikkema, and tell him to undo his reversal of the compact to alleviate her worries. Under terms of a compact, issues such as tax-free sales of tobacco and gasoline could be addressed.

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