



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

John J. Bonacic

Bonacic: Silver Right to Consider Alternate Areas in City, but More Casinos Overall May Be Needed

JOHN J. BONACIC August 13, 2012

Senator John Bonacic, the Senate sponsor of the Governor's proposed casino plan to allow up to seven facilities said, Assembly Speaker was right to consider locating a casino at places like Coney Island and/or Willets Point. However, Bonacic also said, that if more than one City location was being considered, the overall number of casinos should increase from the now maximum of seven.

"As it is, we have more VLT locations than proposed casinos. While existing harness tracks and Aqueduct are no sure bet to receive a casino license, the focus has always been a maximum of one in New York City. We should not be expanding the number of casinos in New York City beyond one, unless the overall number is increased. There are many regions north of New York City that want world class resort destinations associated with a casino license. Those regions should not be deprived of that opportunity." Senator Bonacic said.

Bonacic is Chairman of both the Senate Judiciary Committee, which the proposed Constitutional Amendment must pass through, as well as the Chairman of the Senate's Racing, Gaming & Wagering Committee, which has oversight of the gaming issue.

Bonacic represents the Catskills area, where casino gaming has long been sought. "In the Catskills area, there are many investors who would like to see more than one casino resort. I share that view," Senator Bonacic said.

He added, "If the Speaker is open to more than one facility in New York City, I think there would be strong interest in overall increasing the number of facilities from 7 to 10, so that traditional resort areas like the Catskills could be in a better position to secure two or more casinos," Bonacic said.

In 2001, the State Legislature and Governor Pataki approved up to three casinos in Sullivan and Ulster County to be run by Native American tribes. Ultimately though, the Federal government has blocked any such facility.

Bonacic also noted Speaker Silver's long-time affection for the Catskills, where the Speaker has a second home. "The Speaker has always been an advocate for gaming in the Catskills and I look forward to working with him and Senator Skelos to secure second passage of a proposed casino amendment."

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