



Submission to the Executive Committee of Toronto City Council  
Toronto Casino Proposal

Service Employees International Union (SEIU), Local 2 (BGPWU)

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We thank the Committee for this opportunity to make submissions for your consideration.

### **SEIU LOCAL 2, Brewery, General and Professional Workers Union**

Service Employees International Union (SEIU) is the largest and fastest growing Union in North America with over 2 million members in the United States and Canada.- SEIU is one of the largest unions in Canada representing over 100,000 members. SEIU Local 2 Brewery, General and Professional Workers, represents more than 12,000 workers in Ontario, British Columbia, Nova Scotia and Alberta.

Our Union has a very diverse membership. Our members include workers in gaming and the racing industry across the province including more than 350 cleaners, maintenance and security employees at Woodbine. SEIU Local 2 represents workers in the brewing industry, at both Labatt and Molson and casino workers at Casino Halifax in Nova Scotia. In Toronto we represent more than 3,000 Hospitality, Janitorial, Security and Maintenance workers employed across a broad spectrum of private and public sector employer groups.

### **Scope of the Submission**

We understand that the Committee will receive many submissions from stakeholders and interested parties advocating either for or against the development of a casino complex in downtown Toronto. We do not wish to repeat the positions and arguments that we understand will form the basis of the debate with respect to the feasibility and appropriateness of this proposal. In our view the decision ought to be based primarily, if not solely, on whether or not the proposal provides a net good job gain and economic benefit to Toronto. Accordingly our submission is focused on whether a downtown casino does in fact result in the creation of a net job gain and real increases in meaningful job opportunities.

### **Submission of SEIU Local 2 (BGPWU)**

We appreciate that such a development would create a significant number of jobs in the construction industry in the short term and would also create a large number of permanent, reasonably remunerated and secure jobs in the hospitality industry.

As a union which represents Casino, Hospitality and related workers, we appreciate that in terms of the hospitality industry as a whole these jobs fall at the higher end of the scale. Job creation of this kind could provide a reasonable livelihood for many working families in Toronto. We support such job creation.

We emphasize however that if job creation in Toronto is the reason to support this development, then it cannot and must not be purchased at the cost of significant job loss in the north west part of the city - specifically the loss of many hundreds of permanent, reasonably remunerated jobs at Woodbine Racetrack. Were this to occur there would be no net job creation benefit whatsoever from the development of a Casino in the heart of the city.

In our submission, in order to ensure a net benefit to Toronto, Council ought to be making a decision that deals not only with the building of a Casino in the downtown core but also approves a Casino at Woodbine.

The Woodbine site already hosts the largest slot machine facility in the Province and has proven the synergies that come with providing multiple forms of gambling at the same location. While the question of who operates a Casino is not within the purview of the Toronto City Council it is our submission this should be a Casino operated by the Woodbine Entertainment Group itself. WEG has created one of the premiere horse racing facilities in North America and indeed the world. A joint racing and casino enterprise would ensure not only the continuation but the continuing revitalization of the racing industry in our city. Maintaining a vibrant racing industry in Toronto is a key component of the development of our city as a destination of choice for tourism and business travel.

The development of a Casino in the downtown core can be of significant benefit to our city providing a large number of employment opportunities if doing so does not cause the loss of jobs and opportunities within the north-west of our city. The approval of two Casino sites - one downtown and one at the Woodbine site. - is an true opportunity for positive growth and revitalization in our city.