

January 30, 2013

The Mayor and City Councillors  
Toronto City Hall

Dear Mayor and Councillors,

We are former Mayors of Toronto who believe that it is not in our city's best interest to establish commercial casino operations in Toronto.

In the years we served in office, we saw countless proposals that proponents said would bring the city big revenues, many jobs, and much prestige. And some of them did, but beware the sales pitch. The numbers don't always add up, and we think that is a real possibility in this case. Revenues can be inflated and costs such as police services and traffic congestion underestimated. In fact, extensive research in the U.S., carried out by Earl Grinols, professor of economics at Baylor University, indicates that for every \$1 in benefit, there is a cost of at least \$3. These costs are reflected in infrastructure costs, higher regulatory expenses, additional policing and criminal justice costs, and larger social welfare expenditures.

A Canadian study by the RCMP in British Columbia has also linked increased crime to casino gambling, noting that "members of organized crime also use casinos for criminal purposes such as loan-sharking and money laundering".

And how will local businesses in and around the Casino be affected? According to some studies, not too well. Casinos want to keep you in the building, not roaming to outside restaurants and other establishments in the community. They have their own restaurants and shopping facilities to keep you inside. In Atlantic City many restaurants have closed near the casinos, leaving a few pawnshops and cash for gold stores.

It has been suggested that a casino shouldn't be in a residential neighbourhood. But look at downtown Toronto and almost anywhere else in the city. Condo development is putting residential communities everywhere.

The social costs of gambling must also be taken seriously. It preys on the poor and those vulnerable to addiction. Problem gambling is already an issue. A commercial casino in Toronto will make it that much worse. Studies indicate that where casinos go, so go increases in poverty, homelessness, gambling problems, suicides, drug/alcohol addictions, and crimes by those feeding their habit. Not only are the gamblers affected but so are their families, their kids.

Toronto is not about to become another Las Vegas, a tourist gambling destination. And we wouldn't want it to. Much of the casino revenues are likely to be generated locally by taking away from other games of chance and lotteries. There are already enough gambling opportunities. We say enough is

enough. Governments shouldn't be expanding gambling opportunities as a means of balancing their budgets. A commercial casino operation is not in Toronto's best interest.

Sincerely ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Crombie". The script is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D".

David Crombie

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Sewell". The script is cursive and somewhat compact, with a large initial "J".

John Sewell

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Art Eggleton". The script is cursive and elegant, with a large initial "A".

Art Eggleton