



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

John J. Bonacic

## STATEMENT BY SENATOR JOHN BONACIC: Regarding the Governor's Casino Proposal

JOHN J. BONACIC May 9, 2013

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This week the Governor asked me to hold off on introducing legislation because he wanted to lay out his plan first. Accordingly, I waited. I appreciate the fact that he has now done so. I am pleased he is actively engaged on the issue of gaming.

The Governor has invited the Legislature to work with him on casino legislation. As Chairman of the Judiciary and Racing Committees, I accept the invitation. I will be advocating for three casinos in the Catskills region, not just the one the Governor wants. The Catskills had three casinos authorized by a 2001 law. Western New York likewise had three proposed. Western NY received their three casinos – the Catskills have not received any. Three casinos in the Catskills would bring a greater return to the State and substantially reduce unemployment.

This is an evolving process. If the Governor gets this done, he will correctly be able to claim he created thousands – perhaps tens of thousands of jobs in upstate New York. If however, the referendum is so poorly defined that voters are left with more questions than answers, I am concerned they will vote no. In blackjack, you want as many cards as possible without “busting” – going over 21. Here though, it is too little of something – too little information - that could make the plan a bust.

I am hopeful the Governor will consider authorizing three casinos in the Catskills. I believe voters will want to know the facts before they vote on gaming. I believe as much information as possible should be out there. I believe an informed voter is a voter more likely to vote yes on the referendum. I look forward to finally seeing gaming come to the Catskills, and creating jobs desperately needed there and elsewhere, to help the upstate economy.