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Senate of Pennsylvania

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TO: All Senators

DATE: December 21, 2010

FROM: Senator Michael J. Stack *MJS*

SUBJECT: Co-Sponsorship

Act 1 of 2010 made several important changes to the gaming law. Additional changes are needed to improve the law and the casino industry. Therefore, I will **reintroduce the following four bills introduced in the 2009-10 Session.**

Senate Bill 1258: Ban lobbyists, licensed entity representatives, and their immediate family members from having a financial interest in casinos. Allowing these individuals and their immediate family to have a financial interest can lead to corruption and it is inconsistent with the lobbying disclosure law which prohibits lobbyists from getting a financial benefit for lobbying for specific actions (lobbying on a contingency basis).

Senate Bill 1259: Prohibit all municipalities and counties from entering payment in lieu of tax agreements. Philadelphia entered into a payment in lieu of tax agreements with Philadelphia casinos using the Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance Act of 1976. This law was intended to provide property tax abatements to spur economic development in distressed neighborhoods. It was never intended to provide tax abatements to casinos. If the city had assessed the properties using the current assessment system, they could have generated up to \$60 million in additional revenue over a ten year period. Philadelphia needs that revenue to help balance their budget. Philadelphia and other municipalities should not enter these agreements.

Senate Bill 1261: Improve local share spending transparency by posting local share spending reports on publicly accessible websites. Act 1 of 2010 requires the Commonwealth Financing Authority, the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board, the Governor's Budget Office, the Department of Community and Economic Development to create the reports and distribute them to Legislative Committee Chairmen, but there is no requirement that the reports be posted on the agencies publicly accessible websites.

OVER

Senate Bill 1262: Reasserts the Commonwealth's authority over riparian land in the bed of the Delaware River. The Department of Environmental Protection and the Department of General Services will negotiate a lease for the use of riparian lands by licensed gaming entities. The Commonwealth will receive at least \$5,000,000 for the Riparian Land. Riparian lands have traditionally been held in a trust by the Commonwealth for the benefit of its citizens.

Previous co-sponsors of this package of bills included Senators Boscola, Folmer, Mensch, Orie, Ward and Wozniak

If you would like to co-sponsor one or more of the gaming reform bills, please contact my office at 7-9608.