



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

P. O. Box 7882 Madison, WI 53707-7882

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: August 27, 2014

Contacts: Sen. Bob Wirth, 608.267.8979

Rep. Peter Barca, 608.266.5504

Rep. Tod Ohnstad, 608.266.0455

Rep. Cory Mason, 608.266.0634

Kenosha and Racine Legislators, Local Leaders Call On Gov. Walker to Release Study and Approve Kenosha Casino

MADISON – Today Senator Bob Wirth (D-Kenosha), Assembly Democratic Leader Peter Barca (D-Kenosha), Representative Tod Ohnstad (D-Kenosha), and Representative Cory Mason (D-Racine) called on Governor Walker to approve the Kenosha casino to immediately create jobs in southeastern Wisconsin. They were joined by Kenosha development leaders, members of the Kenosha Building Trades association, local officials, and workers' groups, who spoke about the positive economic impacts approving the casino would have in their respective fields.

“The local support for this casino is steadfast throughout Kenosha and Racine,” Sen. Wirth said. “Our constituents need and want the jobs that would be created by the casino, as well as the economic stimulus it would provide. After 10 years of consideration, it is clear the casino should be approved.”

The Kenosha casino project will create thousands of much-needed construction and permanent jobs. In addition to the 3,000 people put to work in construction for the project, the casino is expected to create 3,500 direct permanent jobs paying a family-supporting wage. It will also create an estimated 1,500 indirect jobs in nearby restaurants, shops and other local businesses. The casino project is expected to become a regional entertainment attraction for the Midwest, bringing in more than five million new tourists a year.

“By approving the Kenosha casino, Governor Walker would finally open the door for a more than \$800 million dollar investment into Wisconsin’s economy,” Rep. Barca said. “We need much greater urgency to seize this opportunity to create good paying jobs right away.”

Building the casino would bolster economic growth for the southeastern Wisconsin region, which could benefit from the direct investment and its associated ripple effect. Racine and Kenosha currently face unemployment rates higher than the state average.

-MORE-

“At a time when Wisconsin is dead last in job growth in the Midwest, approving the casino should be a clear-cut decision,” Rep. Ohnstad added. “With the stroke of his pen, Governor Walker would be opening the door for 1,500 construction jobs and 5,000 permanent jobs that are very much needed in southeastern Wisconsin.”

The federal Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) announced its approval of a proposed Kenosha casino one year ago this month. Governor Walker continues to stall and has yet to release the results of the taxpayer-funded economic impact study. Taxpayers are footing the bill for the study, at a cost that has ballooned to \$1.5 million.

“Racine has the highest unemployment rate in our state, so an influx of new family-supporting jobs would be a game-changer,” Rep. Mason said. “My constituents can’t afford to wait any longer for the jobs at stake here. It is time for Governor Walker to make his decision and approve this casino.”

###