



For Immediate Release

June 19, 2014

NEWBURGH INVITES CASINO LOCATION BOARD TO VISIT AND GET FIRST HAND LOOK AT ECONOMIC CRISIS FACING CITY

Officials Make the Case that While Sullivan County and the Catskills Face Challenges, the Cities of Newburgh, Beacon, Middletown, and Poughkeepsie Combined Have a Significantly Greater Population Living Below the Poverty Level

Kennedy, Piaquadio: Newburgh is Exactly the Kind of Community That Proposition One Was Designed to Help; Newburgh Needs the Economic Benefits of a Casino Project

At a press conference today in one of the most troubled neighborhoods in the City of Newburgh, Newburgh City Mayor Judy Kennedy and Newburgh Town Supervisor Gil Piaquadio called on members of the Gaming Facility Location Board to take a tour of Newburgh to see for themselves the desperate need for the economic and employment potential that a casino project sited in the Town of Newburgh would bring. Kennedy and Piaquadio made the case that while Sullivan County and the Catskills face similar economic challenges, there is no single City, Town, or Village in the entire region that has the level of poverty or joblessness that Newburgh does.

The letter to the Gaming Facility Location Board lays out the economic case for a casino in the Town of Newburgh and the impact it would have on the City of Newburgh and the Newburgh Enlarged City School District. The Mayor and Supervisor cited an almost \$10 million per year infusion of revenue into the Newburgh Enlarged City School District, with a student population of roughly 11,000, of which nearly 8,000 students are classified by the State of New York as economically disadvantaged. As a point of comparison, the student population of all of Sullivan County is 9,574, of which New York State classifies 5,119 students as “economically disadvantaged.” Kennedy and Piaquadio also noted that there are some 18,000 students within a 20-mile radius of the site of the proposed Hudson Valley Casino & Resort who live in the Cities of Newburgh, Beacon, Middletown, and Poughkeepsie and are classified by New York State as “economically disadvantaged,” far surpassing Sullivan County.

In their letter, officials noted: “Rather than take our word for it, we encourage you to see Newburgh for yourselves. **To that end, we would like to officially invite the Gaming Facility Location Board to a tour of the City of Newburgh, so that it can fully understand the kind of poverty our residents have been struggling with for decades.** We are confident that when you see the challenges facing Newburgh and its surrounding communities, you will be left with little doubt as to the paramount need that exists for the Hudson Valley Casino & Resort and the need to grant it a license. Our community needs this economic development jolt and the jobs that would come with it, more than anyone.”

At the press conference today, Kennedy and Piaquadio went on to point out that the nearby cities of Newburgh, Beacon,

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Poughkeepsie, and Middletown have more people below the poverty level than all of Sullivan County combined. In fact, these four urban communities have a combined total population of 102,945 residents with an average poverty rate of 22.4%. By comparison, Sullivan County has, in its entirety, a population of 76,665 with a poverty rate of 17.2%. While Newburgh officials were clear that Sullivan County was deserving of a casino project, they made it as clear that Newburgh was just as deserving, if not more so. The City of Newburgh's poverty rate alone is 27.9%.

The two officials also pointed out that of all of the proposed projects in the region, only the Newburgh Town Project has the potential to impact a community with the highest poverty rates in the region and co-exist with a potential casino in the Catskills. The officials cite the Hudson Valley Casino & Resort's location north of Route 17, which is the main traffic artery into the Catskills from downstate.

A copy of the letter sent to the New York State Gaming Facility Location Board by Mayor Kennedy and Supervisor Piaquadio can be found below.



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Dear Members of the New York State Gaming Facility Location Board:

Of all the communities facing economic struggle in the Catskill/Hudson Valley region, none face as daunting a challenge as Newburgh. With a population of 28,866, the City has a poverty rate of 27.9%, and struggles with chronic unemployment and high crime unrivaled in the region. In the Newburgh Enlarged City School District, which covers both the Town and City, over 8,000 children are described as “economically disadvantaged” by New York State, more than any other school district in the region. This includes over 6,300 who are eligible for free lunch.

But Newburgh is not alone. Within a 20-mile radius of the City and the proposed site of Hudson Valley Casino & Resort, the neighboring communities of Poughkeepsie, Beacon, and Middletown are home to 10,000 more ‘economically disadvantaged’ students. Just miles from Newburgh is the City of Beacon, with a population of 15,346 and a poverty rate of 15%. To the immediate west of Newburgh is the City of Middletown where 17.9% of their 27,886 residents live in poverty. Less than 20 miles away in Dutchess County is the City of Poughkeepsie, with a population of 30,847, where 25% of residents live below the poverty level. The fact is, there isn’t a single casino project proposed in all of the Hudson Valley/Catskill region that would have as profound an economic impact on these struggling communities as the Hudson Valley Casino & Resort would. That’s precisely why we strongly support its application for a license and we believe the Board should as well.

To give you a sense of the need in the City of Newburgh, look no further than the decision by the Town of Newburgh to willingly enter into an unprecedented revenue sharing deal with the City, to provide 15% of its own host community revenue to the City to help address crime. Additionally, the Hudson Valley Casino & Resort has agreed to directly contribute an additional 15% of the total of the community host fee to the City of Newburgh, providing this struggling urban core with an additional \$2 million a year in revenue. For the Town of Newburgh to willingly provide 15% of its projected revenue to the City, should speak volumes as to the seriousness of the economic situation here.

But rather than take our word for it, we encourage you to see Newburgh for yourselves. **To that end, we would like to officially invite the Gaming Facility Location Board to a tour of the City of Newburgh, so that it can fully understand the kind of poverty our residents have been struggling with for decades.** We are confident that when you



see the challenges facing Newburgh and its surrounding communities, you will be left with little doubt as to the paramount need that exists for the Hudson Valley Casino & Resort and the need to grant it a license. Our community needs this economic development jolt and the jobs that would come with it, more than anyone.

Though southern Orange County may be well off, the northern part of the county is simply unrivaled in its economic and jobs crisis. Newburgh is as entitled to an economic game changer as anyone –and more so. We also feel strongly that of all the projects proposed in Orange County, only the Hudson Valley Casino & Resort Project in Newburgh has the potential to both address the significant economic challenges of the City of Newburgh while coexisting with a casino project in the Catskills. The location of the Newburgh project, well north of the main artery to the Catskills, Route 17, allows for complementary projects that address severe economic development challenges in both Newburgh and the Catskills and fulfills the intent of Proposition 1.

Hudson Valley Casino & Resort is the right choice for Newburgh and for New York State. It will create over 5,000 jobs between construction and operation, paying competitive wages that run from \$30,000-\$70,000 for entry level positions, and contributing over \$84 million annually in wages across the entire region. Our community needs this project –more than anyone.

We sincerely hope you will take us up on our offer and tour our city so that you can get a first person look at the struggles facing Newburgh. We are confident when you do, you will come to no other conclusion than granting a license to the Hudson Valley Casino & Resort, in Newburgh.

Sincerely,

Mayor Judy Kennedy, City of Newburgh

Supervisor Gil Piaquadio, Town of Newburgh