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FEDERAL JUDGE DISMISSES NORTHVILLE DOWNS LAWSUIT

On Wednesday, Judge Avern Cohn of the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan dismissed the lawsuit filed by Northville Downs, Mt. Pleasant Meadows and the Great Lakes Quarterhorse Association against Michigan Governor Jennifer Granholm and Attorney General Mike Cox. The lawsuit challenged the constitutionality of the Proposal 1 of 2004, a ballot initiative which amended the Michigan Constitution to require both a statewide and local vote before any additional gaming expansion can occur. The provisions of this constitutional amendment do not apply to "gaming in up to three casinos in the City of Detroit or to Indian Tribal Gaming." Judge Cohn's ruling follows the oral arguments heard last week on the motions to dismiss the lawsuit, filed by the State of Michigan and the intervening defendant, MGM Grand Detroit, LLC.

In dismissing the case, Judge Cohn held that, "...the challenged amendment does not prohibit expansion of gaming in the state by anyone; it merely sets the parameters for how that expansion may occur. The amendment does not single out the Michigan horse racing industry in its desires to add slot machines to racetracks. To the contrary, the amendment would apply to any business that wanted to install slot machines as well as to any interest that would like to establish a new form of gambling in the state, say, dog racing." Memorandum and Opinion, p. 17-18.

Judge Cohn's opinion also reinforces Proposal 1 of 2004, stating:

To effect gaming regulation, Michigan's voters used a means that is rationally related to the purpose: expansion of gambling may proceed only with statewide and local approval of the voters. That the voters who approved the challenged

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amendment chose to balance the restriction by exempting Indian tribes over whom they have no authority anyway and up to three casinos in what is arguably the most economically depressed city in the United States, only enhances the rational basis of the means. Memorandum and Opinion, p. 19.

The Plaintiffs have a period of 30 days from the date of the entry of the Judgment in which to decide whether to appeal this decision to the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit. No notice of such an appeal has yet been filed.

CAESARS WINDSOR CELEBRATES MARDI GRAS WITH RECORD BREAKING EVENT

On Tuesday, Caesars Windsor held a Mardi Gras celebration that broke a property record for motor coaches that have delivered customers to the property in a single day. In all, 55 motor coaches brought more than 2,600 passengers from Michigan and Ohio, making it the largest number of motor coaches that have ever arrived at Caesars Windsor in a single day.

The Mardi Gras events, which were available to all guests, also included live entertainment featuring stilt walkers, jugglers, magicians, a one man band, and a unicyclist, and 10,500 “paczkis”, the jelly-filled pieces of fried dough which are a “Fat Tuesday” tradition in the metro Detroit area and throughout the Midwest. Last year, prior to the re-branding of the property with the Caesars label and before opening of the casino and hotel expansion, the Mardi Gras event attracted 25 motor coaches carrying 1,208 passengers.

Holly Ward, Director of Communications and Community Affairs at Caesars Windsor, commented, “[o]ne of the great things about [Tuesday’s] event was that we were able to attract a lot of people who have never been to Caesars Windsor before. In fact, we had fifty-five recorded motor coaches arrive, which was actually more than expected. The success of

[Tuesday’s] event is another example of the power of the Caesars brand and our ability to attract guest for special events.”

NCPG ANNOUNCES 7TH ANNUAL PROBLEM GAMBLING AWARENESS WEEK

The 7th Annual National Problem Gambling Awareness Week (NPGAW) campaign will be held March 1-7, 2009. The goal of this grassroots public awareness and outreach campaign is to educate the general public and health care professionals about the warning signs of problem gambling and raise awareness about the help that is available both locally and nationally. In connection with the campaign, some new tools in the fight against problem gambling have been released.

The NPGAW site (www.npgaw.org) includes new and updated materials, organized by user category. The resources include factsheets, screening tools, press releases and other information to help individuals and organizations spread a positive message that help and hope is available for anyone affected by a gambling problem. Additional components of the campaign are a national print, television and radio public service announcement campaign and events at the state and local level across the country.

Additionally, the National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG) recently developed a special non-profit NPGAW channel (www.youtube.com/npgaw2009) on YouTube, the popular video sharing site. “We decided to use YouTube because it is popular with kids and young adults who are at greater risk for gambling problems,” said NPGAW Chair Jeff Beck

The NCPG is the national advocate for programs and services to assist problem gamblers and their families. Approximately 2%-3% of the US population has a gambling problem—that’s 6 million to 9 million Americans who may not know that their disorder has a name and that help is available. Call 800.522.4700 for confidential help.