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# The \_\_\_\_\_ MICHIGAN GAMING \_\_\_\_\_ Newsletter



## **DETROIT CASINOS CONTRIBUTE OVER \$2 BILLION TO FUND MICHIGAN K-12 EDUCATION IN PAST 20 YEARS**

According to a press release dated July 29, 2019, the Detroit commercial casinos have contributed more than \$2.2 billion to Michigan's School Aid Fund for K-12 education over the past 20 years. This includes contributions from MGM Grand Detroit, Greektown and MotorCity casinos.

The Michigan Gaming Control Board (MGCB) issued the first commercial casino license to MGM Grand Casino Detroit on July 28, 1999. MotorCity Casino received its gaming license on Dec. 14, 1999. A gaming license was awarded to Greektown Casino on Nov. 10, 2000. Since then, the entire state tax on Detroit commercial casino wagering (8.1 percent of the casinos' net win) has supported statewide K-12 classroom education.

"More than 20 years ago, Michigan lawmakers created a system for the Michigan Gaming Control Board to monitor the transfer of taxes from the casinos every weekday to the State School Aid Fund to benefit public education," said Richard S. Kalm, Executive Director of MGCB. "The casino tax revenue provides strong support for one of government's primary duties: the education of our youngest citizens."

In 2018, the casinos paid \$117 million in wagering taxes to the State of Michigan to help fund education. This year through June, the casinos have paid \$59.6 million in wagering taxes to the state.

## **SAGANING EAGLES LANDING CASINO HOTEL EXPANSION SCHEDULED FOR A SEPTEMBER OPENING**

The [Arenac Independent](#) reported on July 30 that construction is almost complete for the multimillion-dollar expansion at Saganing Eagles Landing Casino in Saranac. According to General Manager, Bob VanWert, the new

hotel is expected to open to the public for reservations beginning the evening of September 8. The new gaming floor, gift shop, restaurant and lounge are scheduled to open on Monday, August 19.

The casino will gain more than 140 hotel rooms, a 200-seat full-service restaurant, a gift shop, 315 additional slot machines and an indoor swimming pool, whirlpool and fitness center.

The casino broke ground on the project in June 2017, with an estimated completion date of early 2019, but the date was later pushed back to fall 2019 because of the complexity of the project and abnormal weather.

“I believe that this project brings something new and exciting to the area that the residents will enjoy,” VanWert previously told the Independent. “The added amenities will draw visitors to the area who may not have ever been to Arenac County.”

Arenac County Economic Development Director, Stephanie Buffman, said she expects the casino and hotel to attract people from all over to the area, which will have a positive impact on local businesses.

“At our last Arenac County EDC meeting, it was reported that the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe had hired over 160 people as a result of their June hiring event and were planning to hire around 70 more,” she said.

## **TWO SEATS FILLED ON ILLINOIS GAMING BOARD AS CHICAGO CASINO AND GAMBLING EXPANSION BEGIN IN STATE**

Governor J.B. Pritzker has filled two vacancies on the Illinois Gaming Board. This comes a month after the Governor signed new legislation authorizing a massive expansion of gambling in Illinois. The Board will be tasked with awarding licenses for new casinos, including one in Chicago, and overseeing the rollout of legalized sports betting.

Governor Pritzker named Springfield attorney Charles Schmadeke as the Illinois Gaming Board’s new chairman. He also selected Anthony Garcia, Boeing senior counsel, to fill the other empty seat.

The five-member Board was scheduled to meet for the first time on August 1. This would be the first Board meeting since Pritzker signed the gambling legislation, which also authorizes new casinos in Waukegan, the south suburbs and three other locations, and the addition of slot machines and table games at horse tracks.

Both appointments must be confirmed by the Illinois Senate.