

Billionsaire Adelson lobbying for Massachusetts casino

Las Vegas – Billionsaire casino magnate Sheldon Adelson has been in his home state of Massachusetts lobbying to legalize casino gambling there, but the casino company he controls has no interest in partnering with Indian tribes to do so, an executive said Thursday.

„There’s no reason for us to talk to the tribes, quite frankly,“ Las Vegas Sands Corp. president William Weidner said in a conference call with reporters Thursday. „We’re not necessarily interested in helping them develop a form of Indian gaming because we do it ourselves.“

Adelson, the 74-year-old son of a Boston cab driver and chief executive of Las Vegas Sands, has „deep relationships“ with Massachusetts politicians and maintains a residence and pays taxes in the state, Weidner said.

„Yes, he’s in the mix and he’s had discussions with the governor, he’s had discussions with the leaders of their Legislature about gaming there,“ he said.

Weidner argued that Massachusetts is missing out on taxing valuable casino revenues, which he suggested are heading out of state to places like the Foxwoods Resort Casino in Mashantucket, Conn., which is owned by the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation.

„Why not open it up, why not tax it, why not control it? Rather than driving it underground or sticking it over on an Indian reservation somewhere,“ Weidner said.

The Massachusetts Legislature needs to approve expanded gambling in the state before a full-scale casino can be built.