

# Massachusetts task force look at casinos

Monson, Massachusetts – As reported by the Worcester Telegram & Gazette: „State Rep. Todd M. Smola, R-Palmer, said this weekend that with Gov. Deval L. Patrick’s casino legislation heading for the Joint Committee on Economic Development for study and hearings, a debate on the bill may well not come before this fall.

„If that’s the case, communities that might find themselves in the neighborhood of a casino have plenty of time to weigh the pros and cons, and fully investigate the impact a casino next door might have.

„Already Mohegan Sun has proposed building a USD 1 billion resort casino on 150 acres across from the Palmer exit of the Massachusetts Turnpike.

„That is what gave rise last September to the Western Massachusetts Regional Casino Task Force.

“ ,We’re not for it. We’re not against it. The task force is neutral and its goal is to fully evaluate the economic and social consequences such a project might have on our communities,’ said Edward S. Harrison, selectman and chairman of the task force.

„...Mr. Harrison said the idea of a task force emerged from an August 2007 meeting of the Monson Board of Selectmen at which Gretchen E. Neggers, town administrator, brought up the subject of casinos and the impact that a casino anywhere in the region might have on the town.

„...Locally, the list of possible casino impacts, Mr. Harrison said, started with public safety concerns such as traffic, and related police, fire and emergency medical services as well as

the impact on the town's roads and bridges, water and sewer;  
and potential environmental impacts such as light pollution of  
the night sky..."