

Michael F. Brewer

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Pennsylvania Gaming
Control Board
Post Office Box 69060
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Attn: Board Secretary

Gentlemen,

I recently visited Gettysburg. This was my second visit in my lifetime, but my first since completion of the new museum and restoration of the cyclorama. I am also mindful that we are but days away from the beginning of a five year observance of the 150th anniversary of the most momentous and consequential period in American history, save only for the period of our founding --- a period that tested our commitment to our founding values, that forced us to face and resolve malignant practices and institutions that

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directly contravene those founding principles, and that set us on a never ending journey toward the creation and continuation of an ever more perfect Republic, respecting the autonomy, integrity and individual rights of each and every human being in these United States of America for equality under the law. Gettysburg played an essential, if not the essential, role in that 5 year crucible of American history. It was the site of the turning point of that struggle --- the war itself and the larger principles for which it stood. It is the site of one of the two greatest speeches in our history --- the Gettysburg Address --- which along with Lincoln's Second Inaugural says everything about America's core ideals and universal promise. It is today the site of one of the most sacred places in our nation.

It is most assuredly not an appropriate site for a gambling casino. If here, why not at Arlington National Cemetery? Why not on the National Mall? Why not inside the State Capitol in Harrisburg?

- ✓ I am a committed free-market person.
- ✓ I am a libertarian in that I respect each person's right to live his/her life as he/she pleases so long as that does not impinge on the same right of others.
- ✓ I have no problem in principle with gambling or gambling casinos, even while well aware of the risks to individuals and communities of this type of behavior (next)

and activity. It is an acceptable form of entertainment and recreation, subject to legitimate health, safety and other regulations.

But, it is not appropriate everywhere. Like rendering plants, hazardous waste disposal sites, or P4 level advanced bio science laboratories --- all useful and acceptable activities, gambling facilities do not belong in certain places.

One of these places, most certainly, is the national shrine that is Gettysburg. Gettysburg is a hallowed site --- a place for study, research, contemplation of the principles and sacrifices that define America's past, present and future, and to enjoy the land, the natural environment, and to partake of the nation's bounty in local restaurants --- and lodging places focused on the living history of the American experiment. It is a place for colleges, for civic renewal, for appreciation of sacrifice, for reacquainting ourselves with the noble virtues of courage and the commitment of the self to great causes.

There are other places perfectly appropriate for activities that focus on the self, the appetites, and the hankering for excitement, indulgence and miraculous yet wearisome material gains. Gettysburg is not such a place.

Any argument of economic development purposes will be proven wrong by experience. Gettysburg's (and its immediate environs) will maximize its economic potential and opportunity of its residents (and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania) by the full development of its unique and almost sacred place in America's history. A casino will subtract horribly from this potential --- in fact, will ruin it. This is a clear case when good old American common sense will provide more insight than all the fancy econometrics and economic development models which, all too often, pass for by self-interested parties (including the Gaming Control Board of the Commonwealth), exemplify the infamous acronym - GIGO ("Garbage In, Garbage Out").

In closing, place the casino somewhere else. Gettysburg should be focused on the greater calling of the last lines of the Gettysburg Address, not on self-absorption and self-indulgence. There are many other places perfectly suitable for the latter pursuits --- there is only one Gettysburg.

It is for us, the living, rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they have, thus far, so nobly carried on. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us --- that from these (next)

hundred dead we take increased
devotion to that cause for which
they have given the last full
measure of devotion - that we
here highly resolve that these
dead shall not have died in
vain; that this nation shall
have a new birth of freedom;
and that this government of
the people, by the people, for
the people, shall not perish
from the earth.

While properly focused and attendant
upon your duties as members of the PGCB, will
you please lift your eyes and expand your
imaginings to this higher calling embodied in
these timeless words? If you don't, if your
dutiful focus is too narrow and too short-sighted,
then you too will be remembered by a version
of the following words for the exercise of poor
judgment and the failure to separate the perhaps
"nice-to-have" from the essential.

Have you no sense of
decency, sir? At long last,
have you left no sense of
decency?

Thank you for considering my views.

Michael H. Morse