

To whom it may concern.

I am writing to ask that you deny the land into trust application by the Mashpee Wampanoag for the land in Middleboro, MA.

There was significant pressure applied by the tribe and investors. We were told that the casino was coming no matter what and that we should accept the agreement or get nothing. The town created the CSC the Casino Study Committee made up of town residents to look at the effects of the casino. This group came up with a mostly favorable recommendation that was a significant factor for many in town that voted in favor of the Middleboro/Mashpee IGA.

Due to the pressure, there was only one or two months for the CSC to look at the impacts of having a casino in town. The resulting rushed document was severely flawed.

The main problem with the CSC study is that they based their findings on crime and social problems on just one study. Please [read it for yourself](#). Of all the studies they could have chosen, I'd be hard pressed to find a worse study. The study is named "Effects of Casino Gambling on Crime and Quality of Life in New Casino Jurisdictions". The study was funded by a grant from the Department of Justice(DOJ) - which is different from *published by* the DOJ. The researcher works for the [Institute for the Study of Gambling and Commercial Gaming](#) out of the University of Nevada. This looks to me like a pro-casino organization though I can't be sure of that. The [few studies they offer](#) seem very one-sided and shallow to me. You judge yourself.

But this particular study is the wrong one for other reasons.

The first problem is with the communities they studied and the type of casinos they contained. The communities were:

- East Peoria, Illinois - population 22,638(a section of a city)
- Alton, Illinois - population 32,905
- Biloxi, Mississippi - 50,644
- St Joseph, Missouri - population 73,990
- Sioux City Iowa - population 85,013
- Peoria, Illinois - population 113,504
- St. Louis, Missouri - population 396,685
- St Louis County, Missouri - population 1,016,315

East Peoria, Illinois while similar in size to Middleboro is part of the city of Peoria, IL- making it a dissimilar community. We can all agree that these communities are **much bigger** than Middleboro with it's population of 22,000. These are midwestern cities that all experienced decreases in population during the study years - implying economic effects that are very different from the economy here in Middleboro.

The second problem is that each of these communities had only had **riverboat casinos**. The exception would be Biloxi, MS which has casinos on stationary barges.

You tell me - is it valid to compare a city of 1M people that has a riverboat casino with a town of of 22K that has the largest casino in the world? It's a totally invalid comparison. Furthermore all of these

communities are classified as cities - not semi-rural suburban towns like Middleboro.

The third major problem with this study is in its components. There were three main components:

1. Site visits to interview community leaders for opinion
2. Telephone polling of residents for their opinion!!
3. Analysis of official data

So a major part of this study's conclusions are essentially an opinion poll.

The study essentially found increases in crime and social problems in some communities, and decreases in other communities. This led them to summarize that "there is no conclusive statement regarding the effect that casinos have on crime".

The fact is, this study was done by researchers with questionable partiality on communities that were up to 45 times larger than Middleboro that contained relatively small riverboat casinos.

There are many other studies, that are far more comprehensive, and cover casinos that are similar to the proposed Middleboro casino and include communities that are much more like ours.

Regards,

Marese Barry-Belanger

29 Moulton Street

Middleboro, MA