



DEPARTMENT OF
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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February 5, 2017

Dear Chairman Barker and Members of the House Federal and State Affairs Committee:

Please let this letter further support the City of Pittsburg's opposition to HB 2173, which seeks to amend the Kansas Expanded Lottery Act. As indicated in earlier testimony, passage of HB 2173 could have a significant negative impact on the Kansas Crossing Casino project, which is only weeks away from opening.

Valued at well over \$80 million, the Kansas Crossing project stands to be the largest economic development project to occur in Southeast Kansas in recent memory. In addition to the casino itself, a 120 room Hampton Inn & Suites is under construction and also within weeks of opening. As the City of Pittsburg has worked with the casino's developers to extend City utilities almost five miles to the casino site, this has also opened a new corridor for future economic development in the area.

All of these substantial investments were made under the current state arrangement, approved in 2007, which set a minimum investment level for gaming operations or adjust the tax rate where there is no minimum investment. HB 2173 materially changes those requirements, which seems unfair to the Kansas Crossing developers given they've played by the rules set by the State.

From an economic development standpoint, it's dangerous for the State to send a signal that it can require one business to adhere to a certain set of guidelines, then change those guidelines for a competitor before the first business can even open its doors. At a time when we're aggressively trying to encourage more investment and recruit more businesses to our state, it's more important than ever that business owners/developers know that the playing field will remain level for all. Please vote no on HB 2173. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Blake Benson".

Blake Benson

City of Pittsburg Department of Economic Development