

Florida Senate Begins Process to Pass Resort Casino Law for Miami's Three Vegas-Style Casinos

By Rosa Schechter

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Here in Miami, those involved in real estate investment and land development had one eye on Tallahassee yesterday, as the [Florida Senate's Committee on Regulated Industries](#) began its consideration of casino legislation - which means, of course, the Florida Legislature is making decisions about Miami's future and the proposed three resort-casinos to be built here, starting with [Genting's Resorts World Miami](#).

Specifically, **committee debate began yesterday** - including the taking of testimony - in the drafting and approval of Florida legislation that would allow these Vegas-style resorts here in Florida.

[You can read the minutes of the meeting or watch a podcast of the entire proceeding this week over at the Florida Senate website.](#)

While many industry experts view the three resort-casinos as economic powerhouses for Miami and South Florida, there are those that do not want the Florida Legislature to approve this land development. Look closely and you will find, as expected, that many of the opponents have vested interests in challenging the resort casinos.

It's really no big surprise that one of the loudest voices is the already-operating casino here, which would be faced with all this competition, the Seminole Tribe, and that casinos operating in Las Vegas are none too happy to hear that beautiful, sunny, oceanfront Miami might have swanky casinos to tempt visitors that might otherwise visit Vegas.

Yesterday, testimony began where all these voices would be heard by the Committee. Already presenting the Genting position, [Colin Au](#), president of Resorts World Americas, one of the world's largest gaming companies. [Au explained:](#)

- the 3 proposed Vegas-style resort casinos are expected to 100,000 permanent jobs in the Miami area;
- the 3 proposed Vegas-style resort casinos will provide 50,000 construction jobs for the Miami area;
- they will bring \$10 billion to the local Miami economy; and
- it is reasonable to expect that they will draw approximately 6 million new tourists to Miami (with all their tourist dollars) each year.

Look around. These resort-casinos are an economic game-changer for our stalled economy - people out of work will get jobs, new businesses will be born and existing businesses will get a boost. Do they need to be heavily regulated? Sure. Do we need to have vigorous debate to make sure that our environment is protected, that our infrastructure is adequate (or is improved so that it becomes adequate) and that the ultimate product is consistent with Miami's culture and community? Absolutely. Should we demand from our government the continuous and strict enforcement of controls to make sure that the casino element is minimized, that tax revenues benefit the people of Florida, and that the resort is in every way both first class and complementary to our landscape? No question.

That's what land development and real estate is all about -- building better lives for people -- and it's important that this legislation get passed. Miami needs this.