



Testimony on S.225 and H.416 An Act to improve the economy of the commonwealth
Joint Committee on Economic Development and Emerging Technologies

Roy Nascimento

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Good afternoon, thank you Chairs Parisella and Finegold and members of the Joint Committee on Economic Development and Emerging Technologies. For the record, my name is Roy Nascimento, I serve as President and CEO of the North Central Massachusetts Chamber of Commerce. The chamber is a non-profit, business led organization with a dynamic program of work that is focused on advancing the economy in the twenty-six communities that comprise North Central Massachusetts. We represent around 700 businesses – of all sizes and industries - from across our region.

I am speaking today to express our support for Senate Bill 225 and House Bill 416, an act to improve the economy of the commonwealth. These bills would allow for the creation of a region D in the gaming legislation. As we look for ways to improve and invest in the economy of North Central Massachusetts, we believe that the awarding of a new Region D gaming license has the potential for a tremendous positive impact for economic development in North Central Massachusetts and the entire Commonwealth.

As our area traditionally has suffered from higher unemployment rates than Boston and other parts of the Commonwealth, allowing a project with the magnitude of a resort style casino in the region would undoubtedly aide in job creation and help to attract further investment and job opportunities upon completion. Analysis from HLT Advisory Inc indicates Massachusetts could see a total benefit of approximately \$233 million a year.

We already know we are losing players from the region to gaming facilities in neighboring states to the south. As we compete for visitor dollars, allowing a facility to come to the region would not only benefit northern Worcester County, but the entire Commonwealth, allowing us to recapture those players and dollars. This would also position the region as an attractive option for underserved players from New Hampshire and open up new segments to which we could market the region.

As the Commonwealth works to promote regional equity, strong consideration should be given to North Central Massachusetts and Worcester County which has been largely left out of the

equation when it comes to gaming. We have been supportive of past efforts to bring a gaming facility to the region, and we continue to remain supportive of new efforts that would be possible with the creation of a new region D. This would contribute to job creation, tax revenues and economic development for the region

Thank you for your time and consideration on this important economic development matter.