

News Coverage on Casino Gambling

Gov. Cuomo economic plan would expand gaming

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ALBANY — Gov. Andrew Cuomo on Sunday proposed a major economic development package that would expand gaming, which could mean a Catskills casino, establish a new infrastructure repair fund, provide more tax credits for job growth and create a job-training program.

The extensive proposal released to The Associated Press and to newspapers statewide as an opinion column is Cuomo's response to an unexpected \$350 million deficit this year and a projected \$3.5 billion deficit in the 2010-13 fiscal year.

Cuomo calls for "comprehensive reform of our tax code" to promote investment in jobs in New York. He doesn't mention raising taxes or adjusting the tax code to raise taxes for wealthier New Yorkers. Democrats in the Assembly and Senate continue to push for a higher tax on wealthier New Yorkers to address the deficits without further cuts to education and health and social programs.

Cuomo, a Democrat, led the Legislature to address a \$10 billion deficit in April with a state budget that included a rare cut in spending.

His plan could be presented in a special session of the Legislature to be held as early as this week, or it could be a centerpiece of his second year in office beginning in January.

"We should pursue a comprehensive gaming plan — recognizing the reality that New York is already in the gaming business," Cuomo said. He called for the creation of "destination gaming locations," which in past proposals from Albany has included the Catskills, once home to a flourishing resort industry.

“Through this plan we can promote job creation and recapture revenue that is currently being lost to other states,” Cuomo said.

He said in the fall that he was looking into allowing private sector, non-Indian casinos in New York to capture some of New Yorkers’ gambling dollars now going to Connecticut and Atlantic City, N.J.

Cuomo also proposes the “New York Works Initiative,” which would create a fund to finance the repair and development of highways, bridges and major construction. That could create immediate construction jobs as well as aid in the long-term growth of companies and attract new employers.

Cuomo called for a second round of regional proposals based on local assets and strengths to fund more job-creating plans. The first round of his proposals for \$1 billion in competitive grants is finishing up now.

His job-training program would be aimed at helping inner-city youths land jobs, and cut into what Cuomo said is a 40 percent unemployment rate in inner cities.

Cuomo called for continued cooperation with legislative leaders to avoid the partisan gridlock seen in Washington.

“Now is not the time for rigid partisanship, but for effective leadership,” he said. “New York state government must rise to the occasion and lead once again.”

The Senate’s Republican majority had no immediate comment.

Press Clip Relevance

Cuomo wants to expand non-Indian gaming in New York State, but that would require a constitutional amendment.

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