

News Coverage on Casino Gambling

NYC Can Handle Multiple Casinos, Mayor Says

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New York City is big enough to accommodate more than one casino should Governor Andrew Cuomo succeed in fostering more gambling in the state, Mayor Michael Bloomberg said. .

“This city is big enough to have more than one,” Bloomberg said today on WOR radio. “We have lots of different arts venues, for example, lots of different concert halls and stadiums.”

Cuomo, a 54-year-old Democrat, proposed in January that Genting Bhd. (GENT) build a \$4 billion convention center and casino in the borough of Queens, about 40 minutes from Manhattan by subway, as the centerpiece to a job-creation program. That plan failed, Cuomo said last week.

Genting, which in October began operating an electronic- lottery gaming “racino” at the Aqueduct race track in Queens, controls Asia’s second-biggest casino operator by market value, is the largest casino operator in the U.K., and owns Resorts World Sentosa, one of Singapore’s two gambling resorts. Its planned 3.8 million-square-foot Queens facility would have replaced the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center in Manhattan.

Since talks with the company failed, Cuomo has said he’s discussing a convention center and casino with other companies. He said he plans a competition next year after the Legislature sends to voters a constitutional amendment that would allow Las Vegas-style casinos in the third-most-populous state.

Less Bountiful

Bloomberg, 70, described himself as having “never been a great fan of gambling as a way to raise revenue.” The industry is “not the cash cow it used to be,” he said.

The best location for a casino, he said, would be “where the population is,” as opposed to using the facility to stimulate a neighborhood economy.

“Right around Atlantic City, they never benefited from that and it’s true of Las Vegas, true of every one of these places,” Bloomberg said. “If you’re going to have it, then why not have it in New York City, and if you want to tax it, use the money to help disadvantaged neighborhoods.”

Josh Vlasto, spokesman for the governor, didn’t immediately return e-mailed requests for a response to the mayor’s comments.

The mayor is founder and majority owner of Bloomberg News parent Bloomberg LP.

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