

We're all here today to say that Mayor Masiello does not speak for *us* when he says Buffalo wants a casino.

I'm thankful to have the co-signers of this letter to Secretary Norton standing with me to state our opposition to a casino in Buffalo. Standing together as we do today does not imply an endorsement of my candidacy, but does signify that we're all putting the interest of the city first and uniting on this issue despite our differences on other issues—including who should be the next mayor. Of course my own personal view is that it should be me, and I hope the many Buffalonians who oppose a casino in our city will keep in mind that I am the only candidate for mayor who is unequivocally opposed to a casino. The voters of Buffalo have had no opportunity to express their views on the casino question at the ballot box, but they can seize that opportunity for themselves on Nov. 8 by treating the mayoral election as a referendum on whether they do or do not want a casino in Buffalo.

What could be wrong with bringing 1000 new jobs to a city that desperately needs them? What's wrong is that along with adding 1000 new jobs, we'll lose 2-3000 existing jobs. How do we know that? Based on what's happened elsewhere and on what Pataki's commission itself predicted will happen to jobs in Buffalo if a casino opens here. Everyone will see the new casino jobs get filled; what they won't see are the thousands of other jobs, scattered about the city, that vanish, as restaurants, bars, nightclubs and theaters lose business or close entirely because entertainment dollars that used to be spent there, feeding our local economy, are now going to the casino instead.

About 150 million of our dollars, dollars from the pockets of local residents, will be spent in the casino every year. Of that, maybe 1/4 will come back in wages and revenue-sharing with local government. The rest, in excess of \$100 million every single year, leaves the area entirely. It pays off wealthy out-of-town investors who will lend the Senecas the money they need to build the casinos, and it buys government officials. The casino industry contributes mightily to the campaigns of the many susceptible state legislators, governors and members of Congress. It is known as the industry that most corrupts our government and our democracy.

What's also wrong is that in exchange for the "privilege" of losing more jobs than we gain, we give away a portion of downtown Buffalo to a foreign nation. The land targeted for a casino becomes Seneca land forever. Our laws don't apply there, laws that include worker protections and benefits, the city will collect no taxes on this land, and we NEVER get it back.

The casino compact covers 14 years; after that, the Senecas may choose to continue operating a casino on it, or they may not. After 14 years, should they continue to operate a casino, revenue-sharing with the city stops. Should they decide to close the casino, they will be able to do whatever they want on that land because it stays theirs forever.

This whole deal is a sucker's bet. We're guaranteed to lose, and lose big. We've got to stop it, and when I'm mayor, I WILL stop it.