

Chamber of Commerce all-in on single-game sports betting



Sports betting

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The head of the Windsor-Essex Chamber of Commerce is betting single-sports wagering could be a boon for Caesars Windsor by providing the facility with a unique attraction amid a competitive gambling market.

As such, a move by other Canadian chambers (covering six provinces) to lobby for support for the passage of Bill C-290 has both his, and the Windsor chamber's full support.

“If you combine the fact that we can offer tax free winnings along with single-sports betting, that's a potent combination,” said president Matt Marchand. “Imagine what this could do for a Super Bowl party. Or March Madness. It would give us a great competitive advantage. Come spend the weekend at our casino. See our city.”

Single-sports betting is legal in just a handful of U.S. states, with Michigan and Ohio not among the four.

If passed, Bill C-290 would see the legalization of betting on a single sporting event throughout Canada. Currently in its second reading in the senate, the bill was unanimously passed in the House of Commons more than a year ago.

Marchand said opposition to such a move – currently against the criminal code – is without merit. Further, he points out that single-sports betting is already available illegally online, with an estimated \$14 million spent each year on the outlawed activity.

“Right now, all you need is a credit card. We call it the underground economy. We want to help bring this money to the surface and make it legal and safe,” he said, likening arguments such as it increasing the likelihood of game-fixing, or, leading to more problem gamblers, as similar to those positions put forward in the past in an attempt to prevent the passage of dice games at Canadian casinos in 1999.

“They used to say we shouldn’t bring Craps to the casino. That if we allowed dice games, the sky would fall. Well, last time I checked, the sky was still there. The gaming industry is a competitive one where you have to constantly innovate in order to draw people to your facility,” said Marchand.

“You can already walk into any convenience store and bet on three, four or five games. You just can’t bet on one.”

“Let’s make it legal. Make it safe. Control it, and, bring more people into our beautiful gaming facility. Maybe create some more jobs and stimulate economic development.”

To avid Pro-Line player Marcus Davis, single-sports betting is a slam-dunk that should be approved.

“Sure, I’d bet on just a single game. Why not? I don’t think this would lead to game-fixing or anything like that. These (players) already make millions,” he said.

“People are already doing in anyway, so why wouldn’t the government want a piece of it?” agreed Davis’ friend, Dominic Jackson.