

Table Games will not boost tourism in area

Debbie Royalty, Charles Town, posted November 3, 2009

<http://www.journal-news.net/page/content.detail/id/527410.html?nav=5061>

It is wishful thinking on the part of local businesses that gamblers that travel to play table games are going to go anywhere else but straight to the casino to gamble, eat, drink, and sleep.

There's no evidence to support any tourism coattail benefit; claims of economic impact are contradicted by the gambling industry's own executives.

Who would know better than one of America's most successful casino developers, Steve Wynn, how casinos will affect their communities?

In 1992 he told a group of local Bridgeport, Connecticut business people not to count on his proposed gambling enterprise for much help.

"There is no reason on earth," stated Wynn, "for any of you to expect for more than one second that just because there are people here, they're going to run into your store, or restaurant, or bar." (page 33, *The Luck Business*, by Robert Goodman)

If you still are tempted to believe PNGI's propaganda that table games will help tourism, perhaps you should read the Urban Land Institute study commissioned by the cities of Ranson and Charles Town in 2004, which states, "The panel believes that at this time, the cities should focus their time, effort, money, and energy on creating an environment inviting to local and neighboring residents -- not CTR&S patrons. **The gaming industry has mastered the art of keeping people within its four walls and CTR&S is no exception.**" (page 14, *The Commerce Corridor Revitalization Project Charles Town & Ranson*)

Casinos not only do not contribute to the economy, they cannibalize consumer dollars that would otherwise be spent at local shops, restaurants hotels.

An owner of five restaurants in St. Charles, Missouri says "casinos have severely hurt my business. I can't even advertise anymore. The casinos monopolize the billboards and drive up prices." (www.casinowatch.org Gambling & Economics.)

Common sense will tell you that there's no way local restaurants and hotels can compete with casinos, who "comp" (give away for free) to their high-rollers booze, food, a place to sleep at night.