

Stand Up For California!
“Citizens making a difference”

www.standupca.org

P. O. Box 355
Penryn, CA. 95663

June 6, 2013

Honorable Kevin Johnson
Mayor, City of Sacramento
Honorable Members of the City Council
City Hall 915 I Street
Sacramento, CA. 95814

RE: Review of City Code Requested --Card Room Re-location

Dear Mayor Johnson and Honorable Members of the City Council,

Stand Up For California! is a non-profit public benefit corporation that acts as a statewide community watchdog focusing on gambling issues affecting the public. In the last two years, the City of Sacramento has considered co-location and re-location of California Card Rooms. In hearings both in the Law and Legislation Committee and before the City Council it became apparent there was no clearly defined process for re-location or co-location of a California Card Room.

The City of Sacramento must consider and develop a fair, objective and transparent process, which provides public input from citizens directly affected by the introduction of “adult entertainment” into their community. Most California communities that permit gambling facilities provide a process that includes (1) advanced notice to the affected community, (2) the opportunity for public debate, (3) review by the Planning Commission, (4) application of the California Environmental Quality Act and (5) a vote by the City Council Members. This is certainly similar to the statements that Councilmen Steve Cohn as well as former Council Member Sandy Sheedy said that Sacramento’s residents deserve.

Back on September 20, 2011, when the subject of locating card rooms was debated, Councilman Cohn said:

Cohn: “If we were to have a process more similar to the medical marijuana dispensary, where there are some corollaries—certain safety issues, security concerns, we take care of through § 5—safety security related, and a land use thing over here where we can add other conditions, where there can be a public hearing before the planning commission and the zoning administrator.”

Cohn: “I am concerned going forward. I would feel more comfortable with a “discretionary permit” that could be appealed to council. That would be my preference. Council call-up a minimum. If the community feels that the Council Member has not heard from the community. Need at least that.”

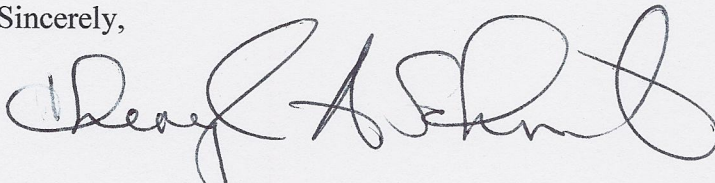
Sheedy: “I have a real concern not being able to have a discussion about where these are located. Club owners have worked with us on their own. Capitol Casino a perfect example—worked hard with the community, got them on their side, to move their casino.”

The above comments of council member Cohn and former council member Sheedy, recognize the need to consult with the citizens they represent in locating any business that offers adult entertainment like that of a California Card Room.

In order for City Council Members to do their job, they must be able to make decisions based on objective criteria. Criteria that must include meaningful evidence that every opportunity has been provided for public comment and allowed for the public to engage in debate. The final decision on where to locate or re-locate a card room must be based on established criteria and supported by evidence of responsible government actions representing the majority of their constituents and regional neighbors. The very integrity of the decision-making and policy-making process must be respected.

On behalf of citizens who have contacted *Stand Up for California!* we encourage the City to grant its citizens a stake in this important land use issue. We ask that you give your greatest consideration of these ideas

Sincerely,



Cheryl Schmit, Director
916-663-3207
cherylschmit@att.net
www.standupca.org

CC: Swanston Estate Neighborhood Association (SENA), Attention John Esquerra
California Coalition Against Gambling Expansion, Attention Rev. Jim Butler
Twin Rivers Unified School District, Attention Kate Bishop Hazarian
Southeast Asian Assistance Center, Attention Laura Leonelli, Executive Director
Neighborhood Associations