

Stand Up For California!

“Citizens making a difference”

www.standupca.org

P. O. Box 355
Penryn, CA. 95663

February 23, 2016

Mayor Wade Harper and,
Honorable Members of the City Council
P.O. Box 5007
Antioch, CA 94531-5007
Sent via email

RE: “Citizens Initiative against Gambling Expansion”

Dear Mayor Harper and Honorable Members of the City Council,

Stand Up For California (“Stand Up”) is a nonprofit public corporation that focuses on gambling issues affecting California, including Card Clubs, betting parlors, the State Lottery and Tribal gaming. Our organization has been involved in the ongoing debate of issues raised by gaming and its impacts for two decades. Since 1996, Stand Up For California has assisted individuals, community groups, elected officials, and members of law enforcement, local public entities and the State of California with respect to gaming. Additionally, we act as a resource of information to local, state and federal policy makers.

Stand Up writes today regarding the City of Antioch’s upcoming election which presents the opportunity for a genuine debate on legitimate issues raised in the “*Citizens Initiative against Gambling Expansion*”. We have reviewed the Initiative and find that it provides protections for the wellbeing of the public and ensures that the gaming ordinance protects the integrity of city council members who are the regulators and enforcers of the ordinance.

The initiative improves upon the Antioch ordinance in four areas important to the public health and safety while protecting the integrity of the regulators; (1) prevents location of a gaming facility within a 1000 feet of homes, churches, schools or business not compatible with a card club, (2) ensures a public vote over gambling expansion, (3) requires a mandatory license denial for felons or persons who lack moral turpitude and, (4) importantly, limits the number of player positions at a single table to avoid card rooms evading table limits by installing tables large enough to serve dozens of players at a time.

Loose local regulations and oversight of card clubs is a serious cause of concern for civil corruption. In 2011, the Kelly’s cardroom in Antioch admitted to having violated State laws. This resulted in the owners agreeing to pay significant fines and signing a stipulated agreement with the State of California to sell the club. Unfortunately, the City issued a license to Mr. Anthony Keslinke who was seeking to purchase Kelly’s but then was indicted in April of 2014 for fraud and money laundering. He has since pled guilty to these felonies. Since 2011, statewide more than 6 Accusations have been filed against Card Club owners, there have been FBI raids, and 2 United States Attorney indictments of card club owners. This demonstrates that a strong local ordinance is important to regulate those gambling operators who are unscrupulous, and to protect the wellbeing of the public and City.

Feb. 23, 2016 City of Antioch

Stand Up looks forward to the upcoming debate on these important issues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Cheryl A. Schmit".

Cheryl Schmit, Director
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