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March 15, 2011

Ms. Susan A. Yocum  
Assistant chief Counsel  
Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board  
P.O. Box 69060  
Harrisburg, PA 17101

Re: "PLAYERS ADVANTAGE" Pittsburgh Tribune Review, March 12, 2011.

Dear Ms. Yocum:

The Rivers Casino is an immense failure. Don Bardon couldn't swing the financing. Credit Suisse backed out. The voo-doo economics employed to get this white elephant built and to stay operational probably and ultimately rests on the shoulders of PA tax payers. Voo-Doo economics is endemic to Pittsburgh and Pennsylvania. Case in point: To avoid receivership, and to support the obscene municipal salaries and pensions, the mayor and the Pittsburgh city council ginned up a plan that taps parking revenues for the next thirty years. What visionaries!! Will there be cars in thirty years?

The "Rivers" is really not a casino. I've lived in Reno and Tahoe. The MGM Grand, Ballys, Harrahs, -- these are casinos. The "Rivers" is a big steel warehouse, with garish carpeting, filled with slot machines, which are nothing more than computers with whistles and bells attached, programmed to pay off occasionally. The architecture is abominable, and combined with that hideous parking monstrosity- it is just Pittsburgh ugly. The place is basically boring. The only good feature is the buffet which is OK but over-priced.

The recurrent management turn-over at "Rivers" indicates frustration and incompetence both within "Rivers" and the Gaming Controlled Board. I remember a few years back when a big shot in the GCB (violating state nepotism laws) hired a relative appointed to a minor position. The employee was fooling around with his girl friend in a Harrisburg condo and somehow managed to drop her out of a 20<sup>th</sup> story window. I assume the boy- friend was convicted of manslaughter, and the \$150,000/year fat cat GCB attorney got fired, but there is no doubt about the fact that the girl is real dead. Is the GCB an example of the Soviet Socialist Republic of Pennsylvania's bloated legislature and bureaucratic structure? Probably yes. If so, Pennsylvania is in deep trouble.

Adding table games at the "Rivers" was a good idea. But fooling around with the black-jack odds: 6 to 5 replacing 3 to 2, allowing the house to hit soft 17, or changing craps tables odds to increase the house's advantage will be a net loser. The population of Pittsburgh with discretionary income to gamble is shrinking. Those of us left, who enjoy gaming will go elsewhere. Wise up or fail.

Regards,

Bill Wessner

