

Don't cheapen our great City-by-the-Sea with casino gambling

Newporters, vote "no" on referendum Question 2 to once again expand gambling in Newport.

Think long-range. Newport is an incredible world-class city, not an impoverished area of urban blight that needs resuscitating.

People come to Newport to wander the bustling waterfront, bike or hike the Ocean Drive, gape at the Bellevue Avenue mansions and stroll through the quiet Colonial neighborhood on the Point. They come for the atmosphere, to relax in a B&B or hotel, to dine at a good restaurant, and then go home refreshed and happy.

They don't come to Newport for the cheap, flashing glitter of a gambling destination, with its self-contained

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restaurants and entertainment, its rows of blinking machines and piles of chips on tables. That stuff is for the dead-end venues, where there's not much else to see or do, and who knows, you just might strike it rich.

Remember, even in this day of technological marvels, time is still a constant. We still can't be in two places at one time. Every hour spent indoors gambling is an hour that will not be spent in the real Newport.

So, think long-range. Despite the enormous sums of money being poured into this referendum by the gambling industry, those of us who call Newport

home still have the last word. We can vote against the cheapening of our beautiful city. Just vote "reject" on Question 2 on the state ballot and Question 8 on the local yellow ballot.

Finally, for those of you who believe all the rosy promises about the benefits an expanded Newport Grand casino will bring us, I was on the original panel that debated the introduction of gambling into Newport in the mid-1970s. The same family that still owns the facility today promised at that time, in print and in public, that if we allowed the proposed jai alai fronton, it would be made available as a venue for concerts and other events for the whole community. We're still waiting.

Roland F. Chase, Newport

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