

**NETWORK OF RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES
PUBLIC ISSUES COMMITTEE**

**RESOLUTION ON PROPOSED COMPACT WITH SENECA NATION OF INDIANS TO
OPERATE LAS VEGAS TYPE CASINOS IN WESTERN NEW YORK**

We are deeply troubled by any attempt to gain speedy approval of a proposed compact with the Seneca Nation of Indians to operate Las Vegas type gambling casinos in Western New York. The current proposal deprives the citizens of the State of New York of their voice on this matter and ignores legitimate concerns that casino gambling will disproportionately harm the poor and most vulnerable in our communities.

Guided by the purposes of the Network of Religious Communities which call us to “work together for Justice, Peace and the Common Good” and by the Sacred Scriptures of our various religious traditions, which teach us to place the welfare of the poor and the most vulnerable first we therefore:

1. Call upon the religious and congregational leaders of Western New York to speak out against the rush to approve a Compact with the Seneca Nation of Indians to operate casinos in Western New York and ask their members to place the welfare of the poor and most vulnerable in our communities first in their prayers and deliberations.
2. Call upon the members of congregations of Western New York to support the right of the citizens of the Western New York to determine whether or not casino gambling is introduced into our region and to ensure that the welfare of the poor and most vulnerable is protected. We further urge them to assist in facilitating discussion of this significant issue in their own communities.
3. Call upon the members of the New York State Assembly to reject the proposed compact with the Seneca Nation of Indians to operate Las Vegas type casinos in Niagara Falls, Buffalo, and a yet to be named location on the Seneca Reservation.
4. Call upon the members of the New York State Senate to rescind their approval of the proposed compact with the Seneca Nation of Indians to operate Las Vegas type casinos in Niagara Falls, Buffalo, and a yet to be named location on the Seneca Reservation.
5. Call upon Governor Pataki to release to the public the full text of the proposed compact with the Seneca Nation of Indians to operate Las Vegas type casinos in Niagara Falls, Buffalo, and a yet to be named location on the Seneca Reservation.
6. Call upon Erie County Executive Giambra, Mayors Masiello and Elia, and members of the Erie County and Niagara County Legislatures to follow the recommendation of the National Gambling Impact Study Commission and “present a comprehensive gambling impact statement” prior to joining any effort to introduce casino gambling into Western New York. According to the commission, “such analysis should be conducted by qualified independent research organizations and should encompass, insofar as possible, the economic, social and regional effects of the proposed action.”
7. Call upon the Western New York media to continue to be balanced in all their reporting of the efforts to introduce or oppose the introduction of casino gambling into Western New York and to continue to educate the public about the possible positive and negative consequences of introducing Las Vegas type casino gambling into Western New York.

The Network of Religious Communities is an organization of denominations, congregations and religious organizations in Western New York and the Niagara Peninsula of Southern Ontario.

