

**For Immediate Release
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FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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Referendum on Racino Recommended by Freedom Township Voters, Planners

Gettysburg, Pa. Freedom Township residents asked tonight for a Referendum* to prohibit a racetrack from being built in Freedom Township, and the Freedom Township Planning Commission voted unanimously to recommend it to the Supervisors

Freedom Township residents have been actively fighting Mason-Dixon Downs with a door to door petition campaign throughout the township. No Casino Gettysburg signs dot the rural landscape. The “We Are Freedom” team of No Casino Gettysburg discussed their work during public comments at Wednesday’s Freedom Township Planning Commission meeting.

Rebecca Kurnat, a working wife and mother, explained during public comments that their petition drive is almost finished and the numbers of signers will be reported at the Freedom Supervisors meeting on May 10.

Kurnat explained, “During our campaign, we uncovered information that Referendum are legal in PA on the question of whether a horse track can be prohibited in a township. We decided to ask the Planning Commission to recommend that the Supervisors conduct such a referendum. After talking to so many citizens of the Township, we feel positive we could win such a vote.”

After once again tabling the zoning text amendment requested by Mason-Dixon Downs, **the five-member planning board voted unanimously to recommend to the Supervisors that they conduct a referendum.**

Charles McElhose of Freedom said he had collected 44 signatures himself going door to door in his neighborhood. “Ninety percent of the people I spoke with opposed the racino”, he said. “No one I talked to was for it. There is a lot of sentiment against it in Freedom.” The volunteers, all Freedom voters, first met in a local home on April 26 and decided to divide up the approximately 400 home township among themselves.

In the hot township building, crammed with over 100 people, 15 residents spoke against the racino, and one married couple spoke for it. Once comments were opened to non-Freedom persons, there were several pro-casino speeches.

The proposed racino must receive approvals from several state and local entities: a rezoning by Freedom Township in Adams County, a harness racing license from the Pennsylvania Horse Racing Commission, and a casino license from the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board. **The Freedom Township Supervisors will meet Wed May 10 at 8PM at the Township Building, 2184 Pumping Station Rd, Fairfield, PA 17320, to**

consider plans for the proposed racetrack and casino. The recommendation for a referendum will be considered at that meeting.

This is the third proposal for casino development in Gettysburg, following unsuccessful attempts in 2005 and 2011 by the same developer, David LeVan. The new plan, located at the Rt. 15-Steinwehr Ave exit, would place a harness racing track, large casino with several restaurants, 1800 slots and table games, a hotel, conference center, restaurant and spa at Route 15 and Emmitsburg Road. This exit is the first highway entrance to Pennsylvania and Gettysburg from the south. The road leads directly to the national park and through the site of Pickett's Charge, the Confederate attack on the last day of the Battle of Gettysburg that resulted in massive casualties and ended Gen. Robert E. Lee's advance into Pennsylvania.

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We are Freedom is a committee of **No Casino Gettysburg**, an all-volunteer citizens' advocacy group dedicated to saving historic Gettysburg, Pennsylvania and the surrounding area from becoming a casino town. Formed in 2005, the organization has defeated two major proposals, and is now fighting a third proposal – all from the same developer – near the hallowed ground of the Gettysburg National Military Park and the Eisenhower National Historic Site.. Learn more at NoCasinoGettysburg.org.

*Referendum in PA

[http://www.palwv.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/259 Referendum-Handbook-1999.pdf](http://www.palwv.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/259%20Referendum-Handbook-1999.pdf) p 20

Horse Racing Voters may prohibit horse race meetings in second class townships located within 50 air miles of an existing race track.¹ The issue may be placed on the ballot by a resolution of the board of supervisors or must be placed on the ballot when the board of supervisors has received a petition of registered voters comprising at least 25 percent of the highest number of votes cast for a public office in the township at the last preceding municipal election. The resolution is submitted to the county board of elections. Following a positive vote in the referendum, the board of supervisors is authorized to adopt an ordinance prohibiting horse race meets. The first referendum on this issue was held in November, 1991. Voters in Cranberry Township, Butler County approved a referendum prohibiting horse racing within the township. Reference 1. 53 P.S. 66549; Second Class Township Code, Section 1549.