

*Testimony of
Mayor Alan R. Lambert
City of Romulus
February 6, 2008
Committee on Natural Resources
Legislative hearing on H.R. 4115*

My name is Alan R. Lambert and I am the Mayor of the City of Romulus. Romulus is located in Wayne County, Michigan, which is approximately 25 miles west of the City of Detroit. We have a population of approximately 25,000. Romulus is the home of Wayne County Metropolitan Airport, which is located directly in the middle of our City.

In December of 2003 Romulus had a referendum vote asking our residents if they would want a casino development in the City of Romulus. The residents overwhelmingly voted in favor of allowing a casino development in the City limits. I believe, as do the residents of Romulus, that this casino would be a benefit to the City of Romulus, and would also provide huge benefits to the entire region, as well as to the State of Michigan.

Former Governor Engler agreed when he signed a settlement agreement with the Sault Tribe in December 2002, resolving the land claim. Governor Granholm also has approved the Settlement Agreement and has asked for your support.

We have patiently waited for this to move forward as the Michigan economy has worsened. We are concerned that the most vocal opposition casino may not even be from our area.

With Michigan in a one-state recession, jobs are leaving the State faster than any other state. We live in one of the leading counties in the nation for the number of home foreclosures, and it is getting worse each day. We have lost hundreds of thousands of jobs in Michigan, and there is no one bringing those jobs back. I feel that a proposal such as the casino could bring 3 to 4 thousand new jobs and millions of dollars of revenue, not only to the City of Romulus, but also the southeast region, and the State of Michigan. This is a win-win for everyone. This is something that has to be done, and somebody has to step in and help.

I want to personally thank Congressman John Dingell, Congressman Bart Stupak, and Congresswoman Candace Miller for all their efforts in Washington. I also want to thank Governor's Engler and Granholm for their support. They all understand the importance of the project and its impact to the state and region.

In addition, it is important to note that the City of Romulus is working in partnership with Wayne County, the Airport Authority staff, and the neighboring communities on an "Aerotropolis Regional Economic Development Plan". As you may be aware, the Aerotropolis plan includes the development and growth of new industry, high tech business and quality entertainment opportunities along the I-94

corridor, extending from the Detroit River to Ann Arbor. Romulus is centrally located along this corridor and the casino located here would further act as a catalyst to jump start this Aerotropolis dream into a reality. Implementation of the Aerotropolis plan will place this region front and center for new economic investment in Michigan.

The Sault project can be the catalyst for additional developments to come to the City, the Aerotropolis, and southeast Michigan. In closing, I want to stress the urgency of getting this approved for the positive economic impact it would have to our area.