

# BRENDA SLOMKA



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### **Casinos Degrade Community Declares Slomka**

(Kingston ON) Mayoral candidate Brenda Slomka decried City Council's decision to support a casino "in principle" and urged residents to vote "No" in the October 27th municipal referendum in order to send a clear message to all candidates that this is not how we build a sustainable Kingston.

"My platform is built on values of cooperation, creativity and compassion. Casinos harm individuals and families, and a Kingston casino would harm our community. Casinos degrade social capital and weaken the local economy by pulling money from existing small businesses. We can build a successful, creative and caring Kingston by working together and innovating, without throwing a casino into the mix," said Slomka.

In 2012, the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Commission released a "modernization" strategy. The strategy proposed increasing availability of provincial gambling options, including expanding and semi-privatizing casinos in "gaming zones" across Ontario. The proximity of urban populations to a gaming facility was considered optimal to boosting revenues and it is almost certain private operators will engage in aggressive marketing and incentive programs to entice further gambling.

"Report after report point to the social and economic drain of casinos - yet reports do not fully capture the human loss and pain caused by gambling addiction. For some, casinos offer the illusion of a quick fix in times of economic uncertainty, but really they're just a tax on the most vulnerable residents, because the odds are always with the house," commented Slomka.

Approximately one third of the OLG's revenues - and 70% of slot revenues - are derived from problem and pathological gamblers, who represent 1 to 3% of the population. Without the involvement of this addicted population subset the OLG's business model would not be financially viable.

"I have been active for the last 3 years at town hall meetings and at the planning committee level and I will continue to strongly oppose a Kingston casino. Instead of a casino we need real entrepreneurial activity, like establishing a significant local venture capital fund and a Kingston Waterfront Innovation District. The establishment of a casino here would be one of the most harmful long-term decisions Kingston ever made. I challenge my fellow candidates to speak out clearly, now, on this issue during the campaign, especially Mayoral candidates." said Slomka.

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