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GARY'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL FOR AN INTERMODAL HUB AT BUFFINGTON HARBOR CLEARS FIRST HURDLE IN INDIANAPOLIS

Gary, Indiana-The City of Gary continues to gain support from Indiana lawmakers in response to the city's economic development proposal for Gary's Buffington Harbor. Gary cleared the first hurdle on Wednesday February 6, 2019 when the Indiana Senate Public Policy Committee passed Senate Bill 552 that will allow a casino license to move to I 80/94 and a second license to move to a location at least 75 miles away from Gary, thereby opening the door for the development of an intermodal hub in Buffington Harbor.

Mayor Karen Freeman-Wilson, Gary Council President Ron Brewer, Gary Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Chuck Hughes and Senator Earline Rogers joined Senator Eddie Melton in presenting testimony at the first hearing of Senate Bill 552. Randy Palmeteer, Business Manager for the Northwest Indiana Building Trades and Dewey Pearman from the Building Construction Foundation also provide support for the bill. The Senate Public Policy Committee unanimously approved the bill clearing the first hurdle. The bill will now proceed to the Senate Appropriations Committee.

Mayor Karen Freeman-Wilson said, "This the first step of many, but the citizens of Gary should be encouraged by the Public Policy Committee's unanimous vote. It is an indicator that lawmakers acknowledge the importance of the Buffington Harbor development for local residents and the entire state of Indiana." The Mayor thanked Senator Eddie Melton, Committee Chairman Senator Ron Alting, bill sponsors Senator Mark Messmer and Senator Jon Ford and all of the members of the Public Policy committee for their work on this initiative. We also look forward to working with Spectacle Entertainment to maximize the Gary casino as an economic driver.

In October 2018, the Interim Study Committee on Commerce and Economic Development reviewed the assets of the Buffington Harbor area pursuant to Senate Bill 24 authored by Senator Eddie Melton and determined that there was merit in the creation of an intermodal hub. The Committee also found that it was optimal to move the Majestic Star Casinos to an

alternative location in the city. Gary's plans include the relocation of the city's gaming from Buffington Harbor to a site on Interstate 80-94.

"The city's efforts do not focus solely on the movement of the casino, said Mayor Freeman-Wilson." "This development is a great opportunity for industrial and commercial development in the Buffington Harbor area because of the proximity of rail, highways, water and air transportation assets. This is about job creation and exponential growth in the city of Gary. We have seen significant growth and increased revenue at the airport through both public and private investments and see similar opportunities in Buffington Harbor."

At the hearing, Spectacle Entertainment, the purchaser of Majestic Star Casinos, presented its plans to construct a boutique casino which includes a unique and inviting casino floor, 200-room hotel, parking garage, meeting rooms, entertainment options, restaurants, and lounges. The planned development will cost 300 million dollars.

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