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January 23, 2012

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New York Times Column: No Casinos

Every Floridian should read the accompanying guest column that appeared in Sunday's New York Times. Those who do will get the accurate sense that the casino gambling industry is America's ultimate vulture – looking to pick our bones clean and using a bad economy to pedal their tired (and false) arguments that more gambling means more economic opportunity and state revenue. If casino gambling is such a great job creator, somebody needs to tell that to the people of Nevada, who suffer America's highest rates in unemployment, foreclosure, personal bankruptcy, violent crime and other social and economic ills.

The casino industry's time-honored strategy of pitching their wares in a down economy means that Florida is not the only big state where gambling promoters have taken their carnival bus. New Yorkers must also now battle the industry that hands out political contributions like a minimum wage worker handing out leaflets on the Las Vegas strip promoting nearby brothels. And if you read the column, you'll see that they're using the same "destination resorts" pitch that they are using in Florida. The column points out the real prize they are after – hijacking a huge existing local market – not bringing in new tourists.

Back here in Florida, the Senate Regulated Industries Committee voted last week to grant amnesty to over 1400 internet gambling cafés – and refused to take up a bill to shut down these operations that some prosecutors say are illegal – and have succeeded in having shut down through the courts. All this as part of their effort to "create a strategic vision for gaming in Florida."

Here's the column, that could have as easily been written about the casino pitch in Florida.

http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/23/opinion/new-yorks-bad-casino-bet.html?_r=1&ref