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Pennsylvania Casino Study Shows Table Gaming a Revenue Producer



An analysis of the impact if table games like blackjack are legalized in Pennsylvania refutes Governor Ed Rendell's belief there is not much potential for state revenues there. The study, commissioned by several casino companies, says table gaming could produce major revenues and help secure the state gambling market against future competition.

Rendell, who has championed slots and other gambling in Pennsylvania, has been dismissive of table gambling proposals, saying there would be no significant income for the state created. But the study by Innovation Group of Denver finds that allowing blackjack, roulette, and such games at state casinos could bring as much as \$1 billion annually by 2012, and develop more than 16,000 new jobs.

Rendell has allowed he might not veto a table gaming bill, if the legislature approved it. Still, he has urged lawmakers to let the existing new gambling venues and forms become fully operational before adding more games.

The state of Pennsylvania is facing an enormous \$3.2 billion budget shortfall, even after the magnificent performance by gambling for the state.

"We are in an enormous budget debate, and it would be imprudent to rule anything in or anything out," said a spokesman for the governor.

Aside from increased direct revenue, Innovation also found that table gaming would strengthen slots and other gambling already available, and would make Pennsylvania gaming able to withstand potential new competition from changes in the gambling laws of nearby states.

"It gives the gaming industry here longevity and stability in a highly competitive market," says Steve Rittvo, head of Innovation Group.

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