

first day of this

At the ~~last~~ hearing a gentleman from Chester, NY, who owns a business in Tuxedo and employs 50 or so people in the area <sup>testimony</sup> said that every business in Tuxedo supports the Casino and you should move to approved the DEIS without delay because too much is at stake. My organization, the New Jersey Highlands Coalition was formed in the late 1980s by the major NJ Statewide environmental and conservation groups to focus their opposition to the planned <sup>community</sup> development proposed for Sterling Forest. Let me ask, is there anyone here today, among your board, or <sup>members of the public</sup> in the audience, who regrets that what was proposed for Sterling Forest was never constructed? Does anyone believe today that it was a mistake, or poor judgment, that Sterling Park State Park, instead of the massive planned community that was proposed, was the ultimate result of that plan?

After reviewing the DEIS, and after listening to the testimony of many of the experts, the DEIS at best is a shelf trophy. It fails at an accurate <sup>to</sup> assessment ~~of~~ impacts to endangered wildlife and plant species. Of impact from construction noise, <sup>of</sup> from water withdrawals from the Ramapo River basin, from construction traffic and operating traffic. It fails to look seriously at the impacts of invasive species.

It doesn't <sup>adequately</sup> assess impacts beyond its own footprint, or include the impacts of new utility infrastructure. We know what Genting intends to build, what they don't report on, and what we <sup>need to know</sup> all are very concerned about, are the impacts beyond the resort property.

Impacts extend well beyond the areas of actual disturbance and <sup>will include</sup> the recovery time for <sup>most significantly</sup> the forest to reclaim its pre-disturbance integrity may be many decades, if ever. <sup>that is</sup> Sterling Invasive can spread and profoundly alter wildlife habitat. Construction noises can alter wildlife behaviors, over a mile from the sources depending upon conditions. Even temporary construction activities can alter wetlands and hydrological <sup>relationships</sup> <sup>and relationships</sup>.

If you want the Resort Casino to move forward, the best thing you could do would be to reject the DEIS, because as written, it could never pass permitting <sup>and scrutiny</sup> scrutiny. Only if oppose the Resort Casino should you approve this document, because the project is cannot move forward with such minimization of its impacts and risks.

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The time it will take

construction of

sterling that is contribute to \$12 million that

truly

conditions

The DEIS demonstrates the blatant lack of regard for the qualities we value, the resources we depend upon and are treasure

11.15 - 11-18