

EDITORIAL: Aiding and a'betting

North Shore News

July 21, 2016 03:13 PM

It appears it's no longer a question of if the North Shore will get a casino but rather a question of where. Both the City of North Vancouver and Tsleil-Waututh Nation have informed the B.C. Lottery Corp. they'd be interested in hosting a new casino in exchange for the usual 10 per cent cut of gambling revenues.

Only one will get it so we'll be watching closely the public process to decide who.

There's no question both proponents could use the money but the elected officials and the communities they represent will have to confront the ethical dilemma of being handmaidens to gambling and deciding whether to proceed.

The way the industry bills it, gaming is a fun and exciting way to spend an evening. For the province and municipalities, it's a source of income from folks who only part with their cash by choice. More inelegantly, critics call it a tax on the stupid.

It's one thing to bring in some whales. We worry, however, about the smaller fish - those who have lost the ability to say no to "double or nothing."

We'd ask that those making a tidy profit from a new casino on the North Shore also put up a commensurate effort to halt and mitigate the impacts of problem gambling – something over and above BCLC's so-called self-exclusion program.

At times, B.C. casinos have been less than wholehearted about keeping the "self-excluded" gamblers away from their demons. But if they happen to hit a jackpot, the pit bosses will step in and make sure the money doesn't leave the premises – in the name of protecting the addicted, of course.

What are your thoughts? Send us a letter via email by clicking [here \(http://www.nsnews.com/opinion/send-us-a-letter\)](http://www.nsnews.com/opinion/send-us-a-letter) or post a comment below.

© 2016 North Shore News