

Sponsor: Scott Rakos  
Councilman, 6<sup>th</sup> District

**RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF HAMMOND COMMON COUNCIL RELATING  
TO THE SELECTION OF A LAKE COUNTY CONVENTION CENTER**

WHEREAS, the City of Hammond, as the largest city in Lake County, Indiana, contributes to the economic well-being of Lake County and the State of Indiana through its billions of dollars of assessed residential, commercial and industrial property; and

WHEREAS, the City of Hammond since 1996 has been an Indiana casino community, generating hundreds of millions of dollars for Lake County and the State of Indiana through gaming revenue and was a leader in casino revenue in the state for nearly two decades; and

WHEREAS, over the last several years, Hammond has seen casino revenues steadily decrease due in part to the Indiana legislature allowing Hard Rock Casino to be built along I-80/94 and the favored tax advantages given to Hard Rock Casino placing other Northwest Indiana casino communities at a distinct competitive disadvantage; and

WHEREAS, the State of Indiana legislature passed Senate Enrolled Act 434 and the Governor signed said bill into law in 2023 establishing a Lake County Convention Center Authority and Lake County Economic Development and Convention Fund *if* a proposal for a Lake County Convention Center is approved under I.C. 36-7.5-7-8 by the Lake County Commissioners; and

WHEREAS, the Lake County Commissioners requested proposals for a Lake County Convention Center and received two proposals, one in Hobart and one in Gary; and

WHEREAS, the Lake County Commissioners have had public hearings and presentations of said proposals and have hired professional advisors to assist in review of said proposals and

are set to make a decision on said proposals on or before June 1, 2025 all pursuant to the provisions and requirements set forth by I.C. 36-7.5-7-8; and

WHEREAS, nothing in Indiana law requires that the Lake County Commissioners select a proposal for a Lake County Convention Center; and

WHEREAS, a convention center that will cost tens of millions of dollars to build and sustain is not in the best interests of the taxpayers of Lake County and not in the best interests of the City of Hammond or its residents; and

WHEREAS, the last convention center in Lake County, the Star Plaza in Merrillville/Hobart was operated by the White family for years and was demolished nearly a decade ago and not rebuilt, indicating in part that private industry does not support a convention center in Lake County and that there is not a market for a viable and profitable local convention center that is not significantly subsidized by public dollars; and

WHEREAS, choosing either location will not assist Hammond's decreasing casino revenues and choosing the Hard Rock location will only act to specifically subsidize one casino's successes at the expense of other casinos in Northwest Indiana including Hammond Horseshoe; and East Chicago Ameristar; and

WHEREAS, nationally, regionally, and locally, an economic downturn is looming including the uncertainty of the national economy and a state budget proposal about to be voted on and passed that will have significant financial impact to cities and towns throughout the State of Indiana and will further decrease revenue available for economic development projects; and

WHEREAS, selection of a Lake County Convention Center will potentially increase taxes and decrease available revenues for other economic development projects throughout Lake County including in the City of Hammond.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Common Council of the City of Hammond hereby strongly requests that the Lake County Commissioners do not select a location for a Lake County Convention Center at this time as it does not make economic sense, potentially subsidizes one casino at the expense of other casinos including Horseshoe Hammond, and is not in the best interests of the taxpayers and residents of the City of Hammond.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED by the Common Council of the City of Hammond that this Resolution shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage by the Common Council, signing by the President thereof and approval by the Mayor.

ADOPTED AND APPROVED BY the Common Council of the City of Hammond, Indiana, this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2025.

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Dave Woerpel, President  
Hammond Common Council

ATTEST:

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Robert J. Golec, City Clerk  
City of Hammond, Indiana

PRESENTED BY ME, the undersigned City Clerk of the City of Hammond, Indiana, to the Mayor, for approval and signature, this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2025.

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Robert J. Golec, City Clerk  
City of Hammond, Indiana

The foregoing Resolution No. \_\_\_\_\_ consisting of four (4) typewritten pages, including this page, was APPROVED AND SIGNED BY ME, the undersigned Mayor of the City of Hammond, Indiana, this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2025.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Thomas M. McDermott, Jr., Mayor  
City of Hammond, Indiana

PASSED by the Common Council on the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2025 and \_\_\_\_\_ by the Mayor on the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2025.

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Robert J. Golec, City Clerk,  
Hammond, Indiana