

Dear Atlantic City Council: Pass the Smoking Ban

Posted by [jamiller](#) October 08, 2008 09:06AM

October 15 was supposed to be the day that casino patrons and employees have long been waiting for: the day smoking will be banned on the casino floors.

When New Jersey banned indoor smoking, casinos managed to squeak under the clean air curtain. They postured and whined about smoker rights and the potential revenue losses and how clean air would put them at a disadvantage while they compete with New York and Pennsylvania for slots patrons.

So while gamblers continued to puff and pull that penny slot lever, the thousands of casino employees who rely on casinos for a living continued to suffer. Even a partial smoking ban has little effect - it's not like smoke heeds signs that mark smoking-only areas. It's a dirty, rotten pallor that hangs over every casino nook and cranny.

Let's get this straight: Smoking kills. So does second hand smoke. Smoking in public, indoor places is not a right when it can kill me, and it should be universally banned. We look back on days when smoking was allowed in airplanes and malls as medieval. How could we have been so stupid?

How could we be so stupid again?

Atlantic City Council is considering a one-year delay on the ban, bringing up that old chestnut that they'll lose even more money if the ban goes through.

Did they consider at any other reasons why they might be losing customers? How about poor customer service, slashes in comps, and maybe - just maybe - that people are tired of losing their money to a house that always wins.

Atlantic City has put millions of dollars into adding attractions for non-smokers and non-gamblers. I recommend Atlantic City visitors to check out the Pier at Caesar's, the Quarter at the Tropicana, the Chelsea Hotel -- smoke-free areas all. But the smoking ban still looms large for those of us who want to experience the excitement of Atlantic City without the health risks and that horrible smoke smell.

So here's what Atlantic City should do: embrace the smoking ban. Promote it. Tout its benefits, pull in people like me who dread walking casinos that smell like the bottom of an old ashtray. Be progressive. Pass the ban.

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Why don't any of you people come to the now smoke free bars in many areas? The whole ban frenzy is based on lies and deceit.