



September 12, 2017

Commissioner Bruce W. Stebbins  
Massachusetts Gaming Commission  
101 Federal Street, 12<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Boston, MA 02110

Dear Commissioner Stebbins:

Please accept this letter in response to your correspondence to key Commonwealth stakeholders dated July 26, 2017 requesting ideas and input regarding proposed investment strategies for the Gaming Economic Development Fund. The Commission's effort to link regional economic development initiatives with the opportunities created by destination resort casinos will greatly benefit the host communities and is sound public policy. It enables host regions to capitalize upon and leverage the economic impacts associated with the casino developments in their community.

The recommendations herein build upon existing regional partnerships and identify potential links with other complimentary financial resources. I respectfully request that you review the following recommendations and consider including them in the "White Paper" being developed by the Gaming Commission.

Bristol Community College proposes the following strategic uses of funds available under the Gaming Economic Development Fund to enhance and expand critical regional economic development investment activities:

1. Section 2DDDD (1) authorizes workforce training. (*Leveraging Workforce Trust Fund*)
  - a. A specific allocation to the Massachusetts Community College system to work in coordination with the Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund to implement "Bridge to College" workforce development training programs with "stackable credits" in high demand industry sectors, including healthcare, advanced manufacturing and hospitality.
  - b. A specific allocation to the Massachusetts Community College system to provide free courses in Adult Basic Education (ABE), English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), High School Equivalency Test (HiSET) preparation and Developmental Education for students interested in enrolling in Community College.
  - c. A specific allocation to the Massachusetts Community College system to provide incumbent worker retraining in non-profit corporations that are not eligible to participate in the Workforce Trust Fund program because the non-profit corporations are self-funding their unemployment insurance.



2. Section 2DDDD (3) authorizes “summer jobs”. *(Linked with community-based summer jobs programs sponsored by WIBs, Chambers of Commerce and private sector)*
  - a. A specific allocation to the Massachusetts Community College system for paid internships in STEM and renewable energy companies. *(Linked with Massachusetts Clean Energy Center and Massachusetts Life Science Center internship programs )*
  - b. Creation of a Community College Conservation Corp with summer jobs linked to projects co-sponsored by community colleges and community partners.
  
3. Section 2DDDD (5) authorizes “higher education scholarships”. *(Linked with philanthropic donations and WIB funding for literacy development)*
  - a. A specific allocation to the Massachusetts Community College system to provide scholarships for developmental education courses not covered by Pell Grants, including developmental math, reading, Adult Basic Education (ABE) and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL).
  - b. A specific allocation to the Massachusetts Community College for study abroad programs in STEM disciplines.
  
4. Section 2DDDD (6) authorizes “regional economic development initiatives” *(Linked with Massachusetts Skills Capital Grant Program and Community College Capital plans)*
  - a. A specific allocation to the Massachusetts Community College for capital funding for STEM classrooms & labs.
  - b. A specific allocation to support creation of a “National Offshore Wind Institute” in New Bedford for “apprenticeship programs” and for training new and incumbent workforce for careers in the emerging offshore wind industry. *(Linked with investments by unions, developers, Massachusetts Clean Energy Center and other OSW stakeholder companies)*
  
5. Section 2DDDD (8 & 9) authorizes “green job promotion” and “STEM career pipeline initiatives”. *(Linked with Massachusetts Skills Capital Grant Program and Community College Capital plans)*
  - a. A specific allocation to the Massachusetts Community College system for capital funding for equipment in STEM classrooms & labs.
  - b. A specific allocation to the Massachusetts Community College for “dual enrollment” programs in STEM and renewable energy.
  - c. Year round paid internships in STEM and renewable energy companies and/or life science companies linked with Community College academic programs. *(Linked with Mass Clean Energy Center Internships and Mass Life Science Center internship program)*



In addition, we encourage the Gaming Commission to consider recommending the strategic use of funds from the Gaming Economic Development Fund for major, one-time projects at Bristol Community College and other public education institutions. BCC's projects listed below are in priority order. (*Linked with BCC capital plan and with entertainment aspects of resort casino operations*)

1. BCC Theater Renovation to support Arts and Entertainment Industry.
  - a. \$500,000 to renovate Jackson Art Center, a 50-year-old, 700-seat theater that is the largest in Fall River.
  - b. Theater upgrades would include curtains, racks, speakers, sound system, seating, carpets, a resurfaced stage floor and upgrades in ancillary facilities.
  - c. This investment directly benefits students in BCC's theater program and the college community with greater access and higher quality productions.
  - d. It would have broad impact on the region. In addition to BCC productions, numerous local organizations use the BCC theatre to host community events including fully staged ballets, professional and community stage productions, dance recitals, orchestral performances, and public hearings.
  
2. Wellness (Fitness Center) to support Hospitality/Leisure/Services Industry.
  - a. \$900,000 to relocate the BCC Fitness Center to the Siegel Health Sciences building and expand wellness services offered.
  - b. Upgrades would include new ADA compliant locker rooms, state-of-art exercise equipment, integrated instructional space for BCC health science programs (Occupational Therapy Assistant, Physical Therapy Assistant, etc.) and also would allow non-credit training opportunities (Certified Exercise Instructors, etc.).
  - c. Students, faculty, staff and alumni would directly benefit from better access and higher quality fitness experience. Relocation of the fitness center would allow for item three described below.
  
3. Expansion and upgrade of Culinary Arts Kitchen to support Hospitality/Food Service Industry.
  - a. Current facility, while upgraded with new appliances, is a 50 year-old retrofitted cafeteria kitchen.
  - b. \$600,000 to expand the current facility into "state-of-the-practice" culinary art instructional spaces, including multiple kitchens and a demonstration kitchen. This investment directly benefits the casino and hospitality industries by providing students in BCC's Culinary Arts programs with greater access and higher quality instruction. Upgrades would be ADA compliant and would allow for non-credit training opportunities.



On behalf of Bristol Community College, thank you for this opportunity to share our ideas about potential uses of resources that will be available from the Gaming Economic Development Fund. Many of the ideas included in the first section of this letter are applicable throughout the entire Massachusetts Community College system. It is also likely that each region and Community College has specific “one-time” capital investments that are important aspects of their respective economic development plans and appropriate for consideration by the Commission.

Going forward, President Laura Douglas designated me to serve as the point of contact between the Gaming Commission and Bristol Community College on this issue. Please feel free to contact me directly via email at [paul.vigeant@bristolcc.edu](mailto:paul.vigeant@bristolcc.edu) or on my mobile phone at (508) 542-9400.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Paul L. Vigeant". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Paul L. Vigeant  
Vice President  
Workforce Development