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## Michigan Casinos

By Adel Awwad

Michigan casinos are found throughout the "Great Lakes State," also known as the "birthplace of the automotive industry." Michigan has a population of over 10,000,000 people, with an area of 56,000 square miles. The capital of Michigan is Lansing, with a population of approximately 500,000. Detroit, with a population of 1,000,000, is the largest city and the leader in automotive manufacturing throughout the world.

The majority of the nineteen Michigan casinos, scattered throughout the state, are located on Native American tribal land. Michigan casinos vary in size and amenities, with over 21,000 gaming machines, a large selection of slots, and 450 table games in the state. There are three casinos in Detroit, all open 24 hours, including the MGM Grand Detroit Casino, with 75,000 square feet, 2,800 slots, 72 table games, and four restaurants; and the Greektown Casino, a Native American casino, with 75,000 square feet, 2,400 slots, and 85 table games. The MotorCity Casino in Detroit has 75,000 square feet, 2,621 slots, 88 table games, and four restaurants.

One of the most popular and the largest of Michigan casinos is the prestigious Soaring Eagle Casino and Resort in Mt. Pleasant, with 210,000 square feet, 4,704 slots, 75 table games, such as craps, poker, roulette, and blackjack, as well as five restaurants and a hotel. Another of the larger Michigan casinos is Chip-In's Island Resort and Casino, located outside of Detroit in Harris, with 55,000 square feet of gaming area, 970 slots, 30 table games, four restaurants, and a small hotel. The Leelanau Casino, in Peshawbestown, has 30,581 square feet, 416 slots, and eight poker tables.

There are a number of smaller Michigan casinos, run by the Kewadin Native Americans, located in Christmas, Sault St. Marie, Hessel, Manistique, and St. Ignace. The Kewadin Casino in Christmas, open from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 a.m., has 8,000 square feet, 207 slots, and eight table games, such as Blackjack and Caribbean Stud poker. In addition, Michigan casinos include the Ojibwa Casino Resort, in Baraga, with 17,000 square feet, 326 slots, and eight table games; and the Bay Mills Resort and Casino, in Brimley, with the same area of gaming space, 700 slots, 13 table games, four restaurants, and a small hotel.

Michigan casinos are a thriving business. With new casinos and major expansions being planned throughout the state, Michigan casinos will continue to be a promising venture. They provide revenue and employment, as well as a variety of gambling entertainment for residents and visitors to the Great Lakes area.

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### **Online Gambling And Legislation**

**By Adel Awwad**

With more than a trillion dollars changing hands around the world on online casinos alone, sooner rather than later legislation will step in to exercise some form of control in the casino industry. Those measures to control casinos and gambling during the early years worked as the casino had a physical location. Today however casinos have moved online with no real physical location. The question arises how legal are these online casinos?

Gambling legislation has not changed much since Congress passed the Wire Act in 1961. The Wire Act states that "Whoever being engaged in the business of betting or wagering knowingly uses a wire communication facility for the transmission in interstate or foreign commerce of bets or wagers or information assisting in the placing of bets or wagers on any sporting event or contest, or for the transmission of a wire communication which entitles the recipient to receive money or credit as a result of bets or wagers, or for information assisting in the placing of bets or wagers, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than two years, or both." This however only covered sports betting and not casinos. There was also no Internet or Internet casinos during that time.

During 1998 both MasterCard and Visa sued Cynthia Haines for money she lost while gambling on an online casino. She had lost more than US\$70,000 to an online casino and could not settle her account with the plaintiffs. She filed a counterclaim well within the state laws of California which prohibited credit card loans for gambling be it online casinos or bricks and mortar casinos. That case was settled out of court. Many states have now enacted their own legislation however casinos have moved their gambling operations off shore to casino friendly countries.

Gambling has increased drastically with the advent of the Internet and online casinos. With huge profits and vested interest in casinos there are also very strong lobbyists in government to keep gambling unimpeded. The Internet Gambling Prohibition Act which was defeated in 2000 shows how much vested interest there is in the casino and gaming industry. Cyberspace is the last frontier when it

comes to laws governing casinos. Only time will tell how legislation will catch-up with online casinos and gambling websites.

Adel Awwad is the webmaster of Online Casinos – Copyright © 2005

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