

http://www.pressofatlanticcity.com/opinion/letters/voice-of-the-people-aug/article_4d74fc56-71ca-58ea-9ddd-e86ac3bedd8f.html

The Press of Atlantic City

Atlantic City, NJ, Aug. 2, 2014

Voice of the People

A.C. a good investment just waiting to happen

What do you do with an empty Boardwalk? Fortunately, we don't have to answer that question in Atlantic City, at least not yet. But with the news that more casinos may be closing, it wouldn't hurt to look to the future with an eye to investing in job-creating, sustainable businesses to replace them - businesses that won't ebb and flow with the tides of whim and chance.

I suggest we think of nongaming businesses that will provide jobs, a tax base and good investment opportunities. We have a beautiful location, with an already established tourist draw. But the beach and the Boardwalk are primarily warm-weather attractions, and we need to attract a year-round commercial/industrial base.

An up-and-coming industry is the development of technology to use ocean tides to produce electrical power. One U.S. company, for instance, is doing extensive research in that field, but it is being done in the waters north of Scotland. Granted, there are far more intense tidal flows in that area, but that doesn't negate the potential for increased research off Atlantic City. The point is, we have options.

We already have considerable pharmaceutical research in New Jersey, but it is primarily located in the north. Why not attract one of those companies to the shore? High-tech research and development is but one area where we have much to offer. What about using a former casino for a television or movie production studio?

Gambling is not dead in Atlantic City, but we should recognize that it is not the same as in the past. Let's start right now to find viable, long-term replacements for its reduced influence. Let's not end up with empty shells and a memory of an endeavor that once was viewed as a royal flush. Our current situation could better be described as an unfilled inside straight. And every

good card player knows that you never draw to an inside straight. You toss in your cards and wait for a better hand. It's time for a new hand.

KAREN PERRI

Galloway Township