

MacLeod wants AG to review OLG's plans

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Nepean-Carleton Tory MPP Lisa MacLeod. (Darren Brown/Ottawa Sun)

Nepean-Carleton MPP Lisa MacLeod is calling for Ontario's Auditor General to review the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation's (OLG) new gaming plans and to assess the impacts of casinos on mental health and addiction issues as well as the impacts on Ontario's horse racing industry.

The OLG announced plans earlier this year to close racetrack slots programs across the province, a decision that will cost upwards of 60,000 jobs in the province, and roughly 1,000 jobs in Ottawa when the slots close at the Rideau-Carleton Raceway.

"The reality is the slots at racetracks program, when it ends, is going to be catastrophic to rural communities," said MacLeod, who will make a private members motion to call for the OLG's plans to be reviewed.

MacLeod raised concerns over the impacts of casino gaming on urban centres, saying crime as well as mental health and addiction issues need to be heavily weighed by an impartial third party.

"We need to make sure that if a casino were to be moved downtown, there will be appropriate resources to deal with that," she said.

"And in the case of Ottawa, for example, if you're to strip the slots and racetracks program from the Rideau-Carleton Raceway, which is a very different type of gaming and wagering system than is happening at the Casino du Lac-Leamy, what happens when you put an Ottawa casino on a collision course with the Gatineau casino, which is already well established?"

The motion will be up for debate on Aug. 30.

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