

Letter to the Editor  
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As an aging native – born Newporter I remember the mid-40's when the Naval Torpedo Station on Goat Island closed down and the manufacture of torpedoes was switched to the mid-west. I remember when the fleet in Newport was transferred in 1973 and headed south. I remember when the huge Navy Officer Candidate School left it's beautiful campus in Newport for Annapolis.

I remember that all three of these local calamities were preceded by an attitude of many local and state officials as well as business leaders, scoffing at the idea that the Navy would, could, eliminate these activities. How wrong we all were. When Sen. Jack Reed D R.I. in 2005 confirmed that the Base Realignment and Closure Committee (BRAC) had saved the defense support industry of NUWC (which alone pumps \$2 billion a year into R.I.'s economy) as well as the Newport Naval Station and the Naval War College, he commented "I think there is a real appreciation of how critical Newport is. It has become the intellectual capital of the U.S. Navy, but there's never room for complacency. We have to build on our success and not just sit back and enjoy it."

Good advice from Sen. Reed, but is the State of R.I. listening? Right now the Legislature is considering converting the slot parlor at Newport into a 7/24 operation and other changes that might lead to a full destination casino. The entrance to Newport Grand is about 1/2 mile from Gate 1 of the Naval Station. Many of the senior military personnel in the student body or on the staff of the Naval War College and other commands have their families with them. Studies of gambling addiction show that a destination casino within a 50 mile radius increases addiction from about 2% to 4.4%. of the population. The entire population of Newport County lives much closer than 50 miles to Newport Grand. I know of no studies which have measured the increase in gambling addiction of families living two or ten miles of a casino. Is it worth the gamble?

Donald Booth