

## Christie won't intervene in upcoming casino closings

Written by Administrator

Friday, 15 August 2014 08:09 -

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Protesters wait to greet Gov. Chris Christie at a town hall Thursday in Ocean City on Thursday.  
(Photo: Bob Jordan/staff photo)

### Story Highlights

- Casino workers facing jobs losses gathered outside the Ocean City Music Pier and chanted "save our jobs" and "five-year promise" as the governor arrived for a town hall Thursday
- Christie said he can't order Showboat to stay open and he didn't mention offering any financial incentives, adding that he's not "the CEO of Showboat." Revel and Trump also headed to closures.

OCEAN CITY – Gov. Chris Christie isn't planning to intervene in the closings of three Atlantic City casinos over the coming weeks but says he's committed to finding a way to bolster the region's economic health.

### [Christie in Asbury Park to discuss clean beaches](#)

Casino workers facing jobs losses gathered outside the Ocean City Music Pier and chanted "save our jobs" and "five-year promise" as the governor arrived for a town hall meeting Thursday. Christie, in 2010, unveiled his first-term recovery plan for Atlantic City and said the tourism district needed five years to reverse its fortunes.

Christie told the audience that a Sept. 8 summit he has scheduled for the region's stakeholders could find a way to stem further job losses but conceded it's probably too late to stop the round of closings that begins with Showboat Aug. 31.

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Christie said he can't order Showboat to stay open and he didn't mention offering any financial incentives, adding that he's not "the CEO of Showboat."

"I don't want to run Showboat," he said. "I cannot and will not order any private enterprise that they have to stay open."

Revel and Trump Plaza are slated to close in September. Revel officials announced that facility's shutdown this week.

Atlantic City started the year with 12 casinos, reduced to 11 when the Atlantic Club closed in January.

Atlantic City formerly was the nation's No. 2 gambling market, behind Las Vegas, but has been surpassed by Pennsylvania.

Atlantic City's casino revenue went from \$5.2 billion in 2006, when Pennsylvania's first casino opened, to \$2.9 billion last year.

Christie told the casino workers facing job losses that he is "engaged" with the issue and that "we're going to do everything we can to try to make sure we keep you safe and secure and employed."

Invitations to the Sept. 8 summit are going to state and local policymakers, lawmakers and casino industry and labor representatives.

The town hall agenda called for Christie to talk about reforms to public worker benefit programs, but the governor started the session by expressing sympathy for the casino workers.

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He said he'll more to say about possible fixes after the summit.

"I'd love to wave the magic wand and fix things," he said. "I'd love to be the magic man, I really do."

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