

How Hollywood changed the slot machine paradigm

By Dan Michalski, Vegas Inc.

Gov. Brian Sandoval was chairman of the Nevada Gaming Commission in January 2000 when the panel enacted a ban on slot machines with cartoon themes deemed appealing to minors.

Controversy over a slot machine built on the TV-MA-rated cartoon "South Park" had sparked then-presidential contender Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., to call on the Federal Trade Commission to investigate whether casino marketing practices were picking up where cigarette mascot Joe Camel left off, luring minors into a potentially addictive abyss.

Sandoval and the Nevada Gaming Commission jumped into action to preempt federal activity and reaffirm that Nevada knew best how to regulate the gaming industry, even as casinos proliferated nationwide.

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