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Why I am here:

As a person of Faith, it is my moral responsibility to strength the political system by exerting strong ethical influences upon the state by opposing policies and programs that are unjust including any form of gambling in our State.

As a member of the EOC Church & Society I have a duty to advocate for social righteousness and defend our social principles including our belief that gambling is a menace to society, and spiritual life, destructive of good government. The Church should promote standards and personal lifestyles that would make unnecessary and undesirable the resort of commercial gambling as a means of producing public revenue of funds for support of governments.

As a mother, my concerns are for the thousands of victims of Gambling, the families of the pathological gamblers. I would like to remind our legislatures of the hidden costs of bringing casinos into Ohio, including the emotional damage and its long-term impact on families and their children. A fact I believe was very clearly reflected in the overwhelming rejection of casinos by Ohioans four times.

Impact Casinos have on our state

Let's start with addressing the issue of the growing numbers of individuals suffering from problem and pathological gambling. An addition, which often results in severe financial hardships, including bankruptcy, crime and loss of employment. The physical and emotional problems linked to the increases in divorce rates, domestic violence and child abuse and neglect.

Bankruptcy –

- ◆ A national study found that counties having a least one gambling establishment averaged 18% more bankruptcies than those counties without gambling.

Crime Rate – Pathological gamblers generally commit crimes to generate money either to deal with their debt or to gamble

- ◆ U.S. News & World Report analysis found average national crime rate in casino communities to be 84% higher than communities without casinos.

Divorces

- ◆ In survey conducted by Gamblers Anonymous, 28% of those polled reported being either separated or divorced as a direct result of their gambling problems.

- ◆ In a second survey conducted by the National Gambling Impact Study found that “respondents representing 2 million adults identified a spouse’s gambling as a significant factor in a prior divorce”

Domestic Violence -

- ◆ National Research Council studies indicates “that between one quarter and one half of spouses of compulsive gamblers have been abused”
- ◆ In Communities where Casinos have been built, the majority have reported increase in domestic violence cases, the increase need for shelters and domestic violence murders have been traced to gambling problems

The greatest tragedy is the abuse and neglect of our Children

- ◆ Children of compulsive gamblers are more likely to engage in delinquent behavior such as smoking, drinking and using drugs and have an increase risk of developing problems or pathological gambling themselves. NRC, pp. 4-7, 4-8, 5-2
- ◆ Throughout the United States, children have been found abandoned on casino premises;
- ◆ Children have died after being locked in hot cars for hours while their caretakers’ gamble.
- ◆ To me, the most poignant case is an Illinois mother being sentenced to prison for “suffocating her infant daughter in order to collect insurance money to continue gambling” – Copley News Service, October 23, 1999

I would also like to remind our Legislatures to take a hard look at the impact a casino will have on the poor.

Gambling preys on people who are poor, luring them with the promise of a life free from financial worries and burdens.

- ◆ Studies have repeatedly demonstrated that 50% to 60% of casino revenues come from low-income and addicted gamblers and 60% having incomes below \$25,000.00 (gambling with the goodlife.com).
- ◆ Households with lower income spend more on gambling than higher-income households, both as a percentage of income and in real dollar amounts. (NCPA Policy Report June 2007)
- ◆ What happens to our families if a Casino were to be built in Ohio? Providing easier access to gambling is not in the best interest of our families.

Remind the public:

"For every dollar of revenue generated by gambling, *taxpayers must pay at least \$3* in increased criminal justice costs, social welfare expenses, high regulatory costs, and increased infrastructure expenditures"(John Kindt University of Illinois Quotes)

In closing, gambling is bad economics; gambling is bad public policy; and gambling does not improve the quality of life. We oppose the growing legalization and state promotion of gambling. Dependence on gambling revenue has led many states to exploit the weakness of their citizens, neglect the development of more equitable forms of taxation and thereby further erode the citizens' confidence in government.

We continue our pledge to the citizens of Ohio to advocate in opposition to Casinos and all forms of gambling.

Harms of Legalized Gambling. Illinois Family Institute study on *Upholding marriage & family, life and liberty in the Land of Lincoln*
Professor John W. Kindt, University of Illinois

National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG) website is ncpgambling.org; "Gambling & Domestic Violence" created 02/08 and " Family Issues" created 01/07

Casinos, Crime and Community Costs by Earl L. Grinols and David B. Mustard; 2006 by the President and Fellows of Harvard College and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Printed on the website of the Department of Justice

News Bureau of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; Archives/2007/October. "Illinois casino expansion would drain state's economy, U.of I professor says" by John Kindt

National Gambling Impact Study Commission Final Report; Chapter 7. Gambling's Impacts on People and Places; website: gov.info.library.unt.edu/ngisc/report/fullrpt.html

U.S. News and World Report; American's Gambling Fever by Joseph P. Shapiro, Penny Loeb, Kenan Pollack, Timothy M. Ito and Gary Cohen pasted 1/7/96; found at the website usnews.com/usnews/culture/articles/960115/achieve_033863_print.htm