

Why Casinos and Slots Will Not Help Ohio

Penn National and the Ohio Race Track Owners have presented 2 proposals to bring casinos and slots to Ohio. Both cite that they will infuse money and jobs into a state struggling with both. Evidence shows that casinos and slot machines will not solve the economic and job crisis facing Ohio. We must stop predatory gambling from coming into Ohio.

- 1. Enshrining a monopoly in the Ohio Constitution.** Penn National's Plan seeks to create a monopoly in the Ohio Constitution. When they spent over \$30 million to defeat Issue 6 in 2008, Penn National criticized the practice of creating a monopoly in the state constitution. Now they are proposing the same thing. This time, though, instead of pushing them out of the Ohio market, it benefits them.
- 2. Working around the people.** The Race Track Owners propose having state legislators pass legislation to allow video slot machines at the 7 race tracks without the vote of the people. This usurps the voice of the people who voted down a similar proposal 2006. Not allowing the people to vote is disingenuous at best.
- 3. The Gambling Industry is NOT immune to economic crises and cannot be counted on as a steady stream of income.**
 - In March of 2009, Trump Entertainment filed for bankruptcy protection and several casinos in Las Vegas are in financial trouble. Casinos elsewhere are also filing for bankruptcy protection.
 - Casino revenues nationally have fallen sharply with workers being laid off and building halted.
 - Nationally, when casinos are introduced, lottery profits fall sharply.
 - "The field research indicates that nationwide you stand to lose 1.5 jobs for every job the casino created...for every dollar legalized gaming contributes in taxes, it really costs the taxpayer \$3.00 to address increased socio-economic costs to society." (Professor John Kindt, University of Chicago)
- 4. Casinos do not improve the economic condition of host communities.**
 - Gambling addiction rates double within a 50 mile radius of a casino.
 - US News & World Report found that crime rates are 84% higher in communities with casinos when compared with the national average.
 - US News & World Report also found that casinos increase the rate of prostitution, sexual assault, drug sales, drunk driving, burglary and car theft.
 - In counties with casinos, violent crime increases by 12.6% and property crime increases by 8.6%. (Gambling in America; Cost and Benefits, Dr. Earl Grinols 2005)
 - Gambling is a major cause of family neglect. Several studies show an increase in domestic violence and substance abuse rates after casinos arrive. Bankruptcies increase dramatically.
- 5. Gambling Preys on the Poor.**
 - The US Federal Gambling Commission found that the poorest Americans spend 3 times as much of their income on gambling compared to other Americans.
 - A Mississippi State University study found that poor people living in counties with casinos lost a greater percentage of their income. Those earning less than \$10,000 per year lost 10% of their income.
 - A Texas A&M study found that those earning 2% of the state's total income provide 10% of gambling proceeds.

With increasing poverty and unemployment rates in Ohio, casino gambling will create more harm than good. It will destroy communities, families and individuals. Economic development and job creation will come with innovation and courageous leadership, not through expanded gambling.

The United Methodist Anti-Gambling Network, Deborah Archie, John Edgar, Tom Smith, Deanna Stickley-Miner Paul White & Belinda Wing; 614-844-6200