



PREDATORY GAMBLING IN NEW YORK

Coalition Against Gambling in New York

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As you know, Governor Cuomo has proposed to amend Article 1, section 9 of the State Constitution to authorize “up to seven” commercial casinos in New York State. Early next year the Legislature will deliberate second passage of the bill to amend. If the amendment were again passed by the Legislature and then approved by the voters in a statewide referendum, the new casinos would create tens of thousands of new pathological gamblers, and scores of thousands of new problem gamblers. Legislative leaders in 2012 have not even hinted at this societal disaster except to acknowledge that state funding for treatment and prevention ought to be increased from its current sub-minimal level.

July 30 starts “National Responsible Gaming Education Week,” under the aegis of the casino gambling industry. The very concept of “Responsible Gaming Education,” as a compassionate undertaking by the gambling industry, is a sham. The American casino industry, according to authoritative estimates,¹ draws 40% to 50% of its revenues from pathological gamblers and problem gamblers, who are by definition *not* responsible. A truly responsible education program focused on the dire needs of pathological and problem gamblers would remove all such customers from the reach of predatory gambling and prevent more from developing. This radical change in customer profile would cut profit margins by half. Can anyone truly believe the gambling industry would tolerate that, let alone promote it?

As a statewide coalition against predatory forms of gambling such as casino gambling, CAGNY marks this week by continuing our own efforts to reach legislators with some unpleasant truths about gambling addiction and problem gambling. Enclosed with this letter is one New Yorker’s personal account of her twenty years of compulsive gambling. We chose this account to share with you from the many such stories we have received simply because it came to our attention quite recently. It is an eye-opener. Do New Yorkers want our state government to lay the groundwork for the creation of tens of thousands more stories like this one? We earnestly hope not. We ask you to vote against second passage.

Sincerely,

Joel S. Rose, Chairperson

Stephen Q. Shafer, M.D., M.P.H., Vice Chairperson

¹E.L. Grinols and J.D. Omorov, “Development or Dreamfield Delusions: Assessing Casino Gambling’s Costs and Benefits,” *Journal of Law and Commerce* (1997: Vol. 16, No. 1), pp. 49-87.

Enc.: “One New Yorker’s Account of Her Years of Compulsive Gambling.”