

*My name is Tina S., and I am a compulsive gambler, last bet September 20, 2007. My game of choice was slot machines in casinos.*

*For years, I was a successful banker, honest and diligent in my work and as a wife and mother of two. All of that changed when I was introduced to nearby casinos. Before then, my casino gambling was an annual bus trip to Atlantic City. When a local bingo hall with slot machines was built, trips there became weekly, then more frequent. I and thousands of others have a progressive illness that worsens as casinos get nearer.*

*You must understand that for someone with this addiction, it is impossible to stop gambling on your own. As my illness progressed, I became the opposite of the woman I had been, now irresponsible, dishonest, and neglectful. I had a terrible illness, the promotion and approval of which is sanctioned by my government, which is supposed to protect and serve its citizens.*

*Casinos have a massive marketing program to lure gamblers. I tried to stop numerous times on my own, and each week, I would receive a new gimmick to entice me back, like “free” food, golf, rooms, free plays, spas. This disease devoured my very being! All I could think about was that “free” play.” In recovery, I signed myself out of my usual casino. “Free play” mailings ended, but the other mailings to my home did not! I wrote I was signed out and that they must stop. I still receive their mailings to the family of “S” or Current Occupant. My local Post Office tells me there is no way to stop these mailings. Casinos stop at nothing to get the seriously addicted person back. It is addicts who feed their coffers, NOT the occasional gambler who budgets what they are willing to lose.*

*The other casino I frequented is in another state. I phoned Player Services to request removal from all mailings. I was told to send them a written request, and did. For several months I continued to receive the mailings. I then sent a certified letter. Only after a third letter—also certified—did they stop. A person should not have to make a request like this but once! The casinos are predators of the worst kind. Those mailings are a huge enticement to gamble. Thankfully, I was at last able to control the urge.*

*Compulsive gambling nearly destroyed my life. I gambled seven days a week. I nearly lost my family, my friends, my home, the respect of my community, and my job. I implore New York lawmakers to vote against any further expansion of casinos in this State. Any revenue that might be gained from them is on the backs of addicts—addicts who not only destroy themselves but who negatively affect the lives of so many others!*

*—Tina S., Central NY*