

With all due respect to your office and committee, I request that you accept these email comments as my testimony regarding House Bill 7054.

Please oppose the introduction of more gambling to Connecticut for the following reasons:

1. When the introduction of gambling was first argued for Connecticut it was claimed that it would be a boon to education in this state, but in fact the money is not wholly dedicated to education as was originally promised and intended.
2. Since Foxwoods and Mohegan Sun casinos opened they have had a measure of success, but with the downturns in the Connecticut economy they both have been reported in the media as having financial difficulties. The financial problems of the casinos do not inspire the introduction of more gambling mechanisms to this state.
3. Between the State of Connecticut Lottery and the existing casinos, as well as OTB outlets, there are many ways that gamblers can wager. One time lottery tickets and serial lottery tickets are sold in most convenience stores. OTB race track outlets adorn some of our neighborhoods. The two huge casinos boast low and high stakes gaming tables, slot machines, and other games. Are we really trying to build an economy on gambling?
4. According to various reports in the media, gambling has proven to be a teaser and burden for low income people. False hope of winning despite outrageous odds is dangled before low wage earners, and yet, in their desperation, they keep biting, glassy-eyed, at gambling's shiny hook.
5. Gambling has increased revenue to State coffers, but it has also drained household budgets and reduced productive capital from what could and should have been savings and investments driven and managed by wage earners.
6. Gambling is an acquisitive pit, not a productive use of money. Gambling does not create a product or service that benefits the majority of users in a way that continues to produce benefits down the social line. Instead it draws what should have been productive to itself without generating anything beyond its own immediate reward. Even the movie industry, its associated vendors, and support services have more productive value to society than gambling. Even the waste products of the movie industry have more value to society than the wages and effects of gambling. Even a day trip to the beach has more productive value than gambling, if one thinks about the goods and services used in support of beach outings and the potential refreshment of all parties who go to the beach, inspiring another round of productivity.
7. Very few people who gamble ever win consistently over the long haul. The effects of it on personal income and productivity are the opposite of earning wages for working a job. As gamblers know, the odds in all the games are against the player so that "the house always wins" in the long run. If the house doesn't win most of the time, then there is no incentive for there to be a house to bankroll players or wager against players. That very fact should tell us all we need to know about the nature of gambling and how it damages our economy in Connecticut.
8. Gambling in Connecticut is a disincentive to savings, a disincentive to investments, a disincentive to productivity, at the personal level, at the family level, and at the community level.

Craig Szwed