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Testimony before the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee **Opposing Bill H.B. 7054**
Good Afternoon members of the committee.

My name is Joanie Masot, and I am a registered voter in the town of Plainville. I am in recovery for my Problem Gambling Addiction going on 12 years now and I work on my recovery still every day. My addiction starting with innocently playing Bingo and it was in no time at all I was gambling all the time with any means of gambling I could get my hands on, not just Bingo. It took me going to prison for embezzling from my employer to support my gambling before I faced I even had a gambling problem. I was able to hide for many years. I am blessed and grateful today to sit in front of you and be able to share my testimony. 12 years ago I should have been dead as I saw no way out of the life I created with my gambling. I have a great quality of life today, which includes being a mom my Son, I have an amazing husband, and I finally have my family back. I also have a fantastic job today with Advocacy Unlimited. It took me many years to turn my life around and get where I am today.

I must say that Keno scares me. Keno is so easy to play...no skill needed. It is an electronic bingo. It is one of the most simple and easy games to play. Unlike other games, Keno actually has no winning strategies. When I played Keno, which I did often it seemed like such an innocent way to gamble and an easy way to get back a few dollars of the money I had lost.

I understand the outlook on Keno and the situation with our States current budget. But Problem Gambling Addictions carry huge price tags. Gambling Addictions are wide and deep and most of the time go hidden. When the Problem Gambling Addictions increase in our state so does the cost to society. We all need to be more aware of the costs of the gambling addiction. So many people are impacted in so many ways that are never anticipated.

Keno will bring gambling into bars and even family restaurants. Because Keno results will be instantaneous and if alcohol is involved it just makes it even more addictive.

I thank you for allowing me to share my concerns today with you.