

The proposed bill implementing Keno gambling in the state is another demonstration of the two dimensional thinking which has led our state and the country as a whole into our present financial abyss to a greater extent than either is prepared to acknowledge. The State's voracious appetite for revenues dominates policy debates such as whether to return to tolls and this ill-advised Keno proposal.

Programs such as these distract the General Assembly's attention from recognizing and implementing steps on the actual path to financial stability: economic growth to prosperity which benefits Connecticut's citizens at every economic tier. In Connecticut's case, the obvious first step is to stop driving businesses out of the state and imposing burdens on those which stay. And contrary to the inevitable "Big Business" demagoguery, it is essential to recognize that these burdens hurt not only Fortune 100 companies, but also your next door neighbor who is trying to keep his or her one person plumbing business in existence.

Moreover, the financial benefit to the state from Keno is extracted from the folks who are the least able to part with their money for the state's benefit, such that many cannot live without state transfer benefits, and even with those benefits still live in constant financial peril. The anticipated \$30 million a year derived from Keno will represent about 0.1 percent of the state budget and a fraction of the projected surplus. Is this justified by the harm caused? I think not.

**William J. Hagan**