PUBLIC TESTIMONY : Public Safety and Security Commission, State of Connecticut
Public Hearing - Tuesday March 1, 2016 February Session 2016

I am submitting Public Testimony on **Raised Senate Bill No. 118, *An Act Concerning the Collection of Delinquent Taxes and Child Support from Lottery Winnings***

Several years ago, I suggested legislation that the State of CT intercept lottery winnings to apply to child support balances, through Representative J Wayne Fox. This legislation passed into law around 2002.
More recently, with Representative Gerald Fox, we initiated the same mechanism to intercept winnings to apply to delinquent taxes. This passed into law as well.
This new proposal (Raised Bill 118) is the suggestion that we adjust the threshold for these intercepts, especially during this tough budget time, to allow for increased collections.
The current threshold is $5000.00, because that is the figure that causes a winning ticket to be cashed only at Lottery Headquarters.
A database is checked at that time, and any tax delinquency or child support balance is paid first from the proceeds.
However, there are ways to circumvent that $5000.00 threshold, essentially by *splitting* a bet. Unfortunately, I have seen it done.
In speaking with a Lottery Claims supervisor in Rocky Hill, she also agreed that the threshold should be lowered, most likely to the next tier level which is $600.00. For claims between $600-5000, there are four different high-tier claims centers around the state (listed below).
I confirmed that those four locales already have the same database equipment that does the Rocky Hill Lottery HQ. They already are able to check names and id's, which is standard procedure, against the database. If there is a match, it tells them to take the ticket to Lottery HQ in Rocky Hill.
Therefore, it would not be an undue burden on the four locales, to simply search the database, and refer to Rocky Hill Lottery HQ if there is a match.
As you know, by lowering the threshold to the next tier level of $600.00, it would recoup a lot more money for both the State taxpayers as well as for families owed child support. A win-win.
In addition, it would act as a defense against those who purposely split their bet. As the Lottery Supervisor admitted herself, word gets around.
A split bet, as you probably know, is when someone bets fifty cents twice instead of the dollar. They can then win that same $5000, but in two $2500 increments, thereby defeating the existing $5000 threshold and circumventing the intercept.
I look forward to being of any assistance that I can in furthering this bill, and hope for your support.

Very truly yours,

Anthony Martino

Anthony Martino
Stamford CT

Connecticut Lottery Locations:
Rocky Hill - CT Lottery Headquarters
777 Brook Street 06067 (860)713-2000

High-Tier Claim Centers (four locations)
New London Sully's Mobil®
382 Vauxhall Street 06320 (860)443-5938

Norwalk Crossroads Card & Gift
280 Connecticut Avenue 06854 (203)852-9671

West Haven C&A Market
1088 Boston Post Road 06516 (203)932-4296

Waterbury DaDa Deli LLC
757 Meriden Road 06705 (203)573-0029