

Testimony in Opposition to:
**H.B. 7055: An Act Creating thje Connecticut Gambling Commission and Creating a
Competitive Bidding Process for a Resort Casino**
SB 11: An Act Concerning the Authorization of a Casino Gaming Facility in East Windsor
SB 17: An Act Authorizing Sports Wagering, Internet Gambling and Internet Keno
SB 665: An Act Concerning Sports Wagering

Submitted by Rev. Shannon Wall
February 25, 2019

Distinguished members of the Public Safety Committee:

I am Rev. Shannon Wall, 151 Flanders Road, Woodbury, CT, and Acting Pastor of the First Congregational Church of New Milford. I am also a member of the Coalition Against Casino Expansion in Connecticut (CACE).

Our Coalition against Casino Expansion in CT (CACE) is a group of 14 faith communities and organizations representing over a million people in Connecticut. Our Coalition spans a broad range of progressive and conservative viewpoints. We have joined together in a non-partisan alliance to oppose the expansion of casinos, sports wagering, internet gambling and internet Keno. **I am writing today in opposition to HB 7055, SB 11, SB 17 and SB 665.**

In my work as a pastor, I have seen the devastating effects of gambling addiction on individuals and families. I am currently counseling and attempting to help individuals who have lost their jobs, families, and friends and even faced jail time due to gambling addictions.

Gambling disproportionately and adversely affects low-income earners, retirees, the mentally ill, and the unemployed--populations that are already suffering from economic inequality.

Gambling addictions have real negative consequences for people and communities: increased crime, instability of employment, bankruptcy, suicide, illnesses, and increased need for scarce social services resources.

Thank you for your work and the opportunity to supply written testimony in opposition to **HB 7055, SB 11, SB 17 and SB 665.**

I would be happy to answer any questions.

Sincerely,

Rev. Shannon Wall

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The members of the Coalition Against Casino Expansion in Connecticut include: Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ – Episcopal Church in Connecticut – Connecticut League of Women Voters – Connecticut Catholic Conference -- Family Institute of Connecticut – New England Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church of America – Connecticut Association for Human Services – Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport – Advocacy Unlimited, Inc. – Farmington Valley American Muslim Center and Bridgeport Islamic Community Center - Resident Bishop New England Conference of the United Methodist Church – American Baptist Churches of Connecticut – Presbytery of Southern New England