

April 14, 2008

Casino Watch Policy Briefs by Joseph Day

Expanded Gambling: Casinos' impact on a new community

Someone must meet five of 10 criteria to be diagnosed as pathological: American Psychiatric Association

- **Gambled longer than planned**
- **Gambled until last dollar was gone**
- **Lost sleep because of thoughts of gambling**
- **Used income or savings to gamble, leaving bills unpaid**
- **Made repeated, unsuccessful attempts to stop gambling**
- **Broke law or considered breaking law to finance gambling**
- **Borrowed money to finance gambling**
- **Felt depressed or suicidal because of gambling losses**
- **Been remorseful after gambling**
- **Gambled to get money to meet financial obligations**

"Pathological gambling is often characterized as an addiction-like disorder, with the affected person being addicted to the excitement felt while being 'in action' (gambling)."
American Psychiatric Association

Resolution No. 430 WARNING: GAMBLING CAN BECOME COMPULSIVE BEHAVIOR HOUSE ACTION; ADOPTED AS FOLLOWS: RESOLVED, That the **American Medical Association encourage physicians to advise their patients of the compulsive behavior potential of gambling;**

"Pathological gambling is one of the fastest growing mental health problems in the western world." New England Journal of Medicine

"Pathological gambling is really a huge public health problem" Dr. Susan McElroy, a psychiatry professor at the University of Cincinnati who studies and counsels compulsive gamblers. Canada Safety Council

"It is a life-threatening disease" William Gorman, commissioner of New York's Office of Alcoholism & Substance Abuse Services

The American Psychological Association estimates that 2% to 4% of Americans have an active gambling problem. Benefitnews.com, NY January 29, 07 Problem gambling prevalent in the workplace

The National Research Council has estimated the median number of problem gamblers at about 1.5 percent of the population. Welte's estimate is nearly 5 percent. University of Buffalo researcher John Welte International Symposium on Problem Gambling and Co-Occurring Disorders meeting www.ctnow.com/news/local/hc- Researchers See Growth In Gambling Problems October 19, 2004

"The number of problem gamblers doubles when there's a casino within 50 miles" National Gambling Impact Study Commission

"So when you're dealing with one addict, you're dealing with 8-10 other people that get affected because of the addiction." Ed Looney: the Council for Compulsive Gambling. www.family.org/cforum March 21, 2006 Gambling at an All Time High

Arnie Wexler, the former executive director of the New Jersey Council on Compulsive Gambling and now head of a consulting firm that specializes in compulsive gambling and other addictions, has said that the rate of attempted suicide among compulsive gamblers is 200 times the national average. September 6, 1999 The Advocate

More than 53 percent reported having been divorced in the National Opinion Research Center survey. Multiple failed marriages also are higher among gamblers than the population in general. May 22, 2006 More spent on promoting gambling than curing the ills it causes Blethen Maine Newspapers Inc.

The costs of problem gambling extend from domestic abuse to financial ruin, said Henry Lesieur, a leading researcher from Rhode Island and president of the Institute for Problem Gambling, based in Middletown. "Problem gamblers are 10 times more likely to be involved in a hospital emergency room [for treatment] than non-gamblers." www.ctnow.com Researchers See Growth In Gambling Problems October 19, 2004

Ironically, it's been found that stress-related illnesses associated with people with gambling problems, such as headaches, high blood pressure, anxiety and depression, also have been found in family members. Buffalo News
www.buffalonews.com/editorial/20030727/1046133.asp

"ACCESS TO GAMBLING IS A CRITICAL ISSUE FOR PROBLEM GAMBLERS WHO COMMIT CRIMES." "I'M 100% CONVINCED THAT THEY WOULD NOT HAVE ENGAGED IN THOSE CRIMES IF GAMBLING WERE NOT LEGAL" Henry Lesieur former chairman of the Criminal Justice Dept. at Illinois State University

Lesieur (1998b) surveyed nearly 400 members of Gamblers Anonymous, 57% of whom admitted stealing to finance their gambling. On average these 400 people stole \$135,000 and their total theft was over \$30 million. Business Profitability Versus Social Profitability: Evaluating Industries with Externalities, The Case of the Casino Industry By Earl L. Grinols and David B. Mustard <http://www.cba.uiuc.edu/grinols/Scribblings/Casinos-Crime-15SEP00.pdf>

44% Of Illinois Gamblers Anonymous members stole from work to pay gambling debts. Lesieur, Ph.D., Anderson, MS, NCGC, LMFT.

Bankruptcies, lost productivity and thefts from gambling addiction were estimated at \$5 billion in 1999. The National Council on Problem Gambling

Grinols' studies also show that between 37 and 50 percent of casino revenues come from pathological or problem gamblers. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS/Maine's neighbors would copy casinos /11.10.02 [Gambling in America, Costs and Benefits by Earl L. Grinols](#)

A new study, funded by the province, measured the spending habits of problem gamblers in Ontario. It found that 35 per cent of money raised through gambling - \$1.4 billion - comes from problem gamblers...

CBC/Ontario wins 35% of gambling cash from problem gamblers/11.2.04

Mr. McGuinty's comments came in response to a new study that suggests about 36 per cent of Ontario gaming revenue is generated by people with gambling addictions. The study by researchers Rob Williams and Rob Wood at the University of Lethbridge in Alberta... The Ottawa Citizen/Ontario addicted to gambling revenue/11.03.04

4% OF OUR CHILDREN ADDICTED TO GAMBLING American Psychiatric Association, Annenberg National Risk Survey of Youth, Dr. Carlos Blanco, Columbia University Medical Center, Jeffery Derevensky and Rina Gupta of McGill University, ED LOONEY, Council on Compulsive Gambling of N.J., Dalhousie University, Harvard Medical School, Louisiana State

University Health Sciences Center, Minnesota Institute of Public Health, National Council on Problem Gambling, Michael Stone, Kentucky Council on Problem Gambling, Emily E. Wilson licensed psychologist, Harold Wynne of Wynne Resources in British Columbia

20% of addicted gamblers have filed for bankruptcy.

Professor John Warren Kindt, John K. Palchak, Bankruptcy Developments Journal volume 19, No. 1

In 1996 the bankruptcy rate was 35% higher than the average in counties with five or more gambling establishments Shelby County, TN, where residents have easy access to 30 gaming halls and riverboat casinos in nearby Mississippi locations, has the highest personal bankruptcy rate in the nation --four times the national average

SMR Research Corporation 1996

20% of the homeless are gambling addicts

Atlantic City Rescue Mission, Association of Gospel Rescue Missions in Kansas

60% of those addicted to gambling will commit crimes.

63% of gambling addicts are alcoholics.

California Council on Problem Gambling

"Research shows that if you have a gambling problem you will likely have an alcohol problem as well, and a drug problem. The reverse, however, is not true." Alcoholics don't turn to gambling, but gamblers turn to alcohol to relieve mental anguish.

H. Wesley Clark, MD, JD, MPH, CAS, FASAM

Keynote Speaker: MIDWEST CONFERENCE ON PROBLEM GAMBLING & SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Up to 50% of spouses of addicted gamblers are abused. When casinos opened in SD child abuse rose by 42% and domestic assaults by 80%.

National Research Council, The Guardian 11.5.04

20% of gambling addicts commit or attempt suicide.

National Council on Problem Gambling

"ON AVERAGE, PEOPLE WHO GAMBLE LOSE MONEY, AND PEOPLE WHO GAMBLE A GREAT DEAL CAN LOSE A GREAT DEAL OF MONEY. WHILE THIS MAY NOT LEAD TO SUICIDE BY THE GAMBLER, IT COULD LEAD TO SUICIDE BY THE GAMBLER'S SPOUSE, SON, RELATIVE, OR BUSINESS PARTNER."

Dr. David Phillips, University of California-San Diego, 12/15/97

SUICIDE & LIFE-THREATENING BEHAVIOR Elevated Suicide Levels Associated with Legalized Gambling

Canada has up to 360 suicides a year by gambling addicts. Canada Safety Council

"Studies show that two out of three pathological gamblers commit crimes to pay off debt or to continue gambling. While the majority of crimes are nonviolent and involve embezzlement, cheque forgery, stealing credit cards, tax evasion, fencing stolen goods, insurance fraud, bookmaking, and/or employee theft, in some cases they involve violence and armed robbery." (National Council on Welfare, 1996, p.28) Problem gambling, while providing additional revenues, also results in significant costs to the individual, his or her family, and society as a whole. Uncontrolled spending, the resulting debts and the strategies used to gain more money to gamble has a significant impact on many determinants of health and can cause marital conflict, child neglect, poor work performance, multiple addictions, stress-related physical ailments, crime and even suicide (Topp, Sawka, Room, Poulin, Single and Thompson, 1998)

The cost of problem and pathological gambling does not only affect individuals and their families. Society also bears the brunt of gambling, with the overall cost to taxpayers estimated at \$56,000 for each problem gambler, including cost of treatment, health-related costs, absenteeism at work and time spent in courts

(National Council on Welfare, 1996), Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit
www.healthunit.org/adults/php_gambling.htm, A Public Health Perspective on Gambling in Ontario

Crime statistics are equally revealing. State Police Troop E, responsible for the areas in which Foxwoods and Mohegan Sun (casinos) are located, must contend with the highest drunk driving rate in the state. North Stonington has closed two houses of prostitution.

www.zwire.com/site/news.cfm? Is a gambling casino a good idea for anyone? 06/18/2004

The average (gambling) debt is between \$63,000 and \$110,000.

CT Department of Mental Health

Each pathological gambler on average costs the insurance industry \$64,468 for fraudulent claims. The annual loss due to fraud by pathological gamblers is estimated to be \$1.32 billion.

The WAGER, Harvard Medical School, Division on Addictions April 9, 1996

Business and Employment Costs: These costs include lost productivity on the job, lost time and unemployment, sick days off for gambling, extended lunch hours, leaving early to gamble, and returning late after gambling. Problem and pathological gamblers often impose costs on their employers (in addition to theft or embezzlement) in the form of an unreliable presence on the job and reduced productivity when present.

Among the forms of sickness associated with gambling or affected by it are depression, stress-related illness, chronic or severe headaches, anxiety, moodiness, irritability, intestinal disorders, asthma, cognitive distortions, and cardio-vascular disorders. This category of costs includes therapy/treatment costs, unemployment and other social service costs (includes welfare and food stamps).

Society's cost per pathological gambler per year is \$13,586. Crime, Suicide, Illness, Business, Employment Costs, Bankruptcy, Social Services, Government Direct Regulatory Costs.

Business Profitability vs. Social Profitability: Evaluating The Social Contribution Of Industries With Externalities, The Case Of The Casino

Earl L. Grinols, Dept. Economics, University of Illinois and David B. Mustard
Dept. of Economics, University of Georgia