

No groundswell of Ohioans seeks legalization of commercialized sports gambling or any expansion of gambling: it's just another scam, sure to increase the already-obscene wealth disparity and to decrease the respect once due democratic institutions. Why would legislators vote to unleash a cancer on Ohioans? Or do they truly no longer care? It is all about money – intentionally addicting people to change their brains - to get as much of their money to extinction!

Beware!

SB176, will for sure, increase gambling addictions which lead to financial loss, destroying families and even suicide. One in 5 gambling addicts attempts suicide! This will be the sad legacy if proposed legislation passes.

Please take a hard look at the players in this game:

The Gambler – Many people may think of sports betting is a form of social interaction and entertainment – but there are potentially serious consequences. Sports betting leads to gambling addiction which is a progressive disease. In a fascinating article in National Geographic, "The Science of Addiction, The Addicted Brain", states the brain gets rewired by the consistent stimulus of gambling. The brain loses its ability to reason creating a strong desire for the high of gambling. A cycle of desire, bingeing and withdrawal similar to opioids and cocaine

Younger males prefer sports gambling . The betting fan is not engaged with sport, but with gambling. For commercialized sports gamblers, money is the prime motivator--team support, the beauty of play, and honest competition become entirely secondary, and game integrity is put at risk at every level of competition. Gamblers take from savings, retirement, borrow from family, take out personal loans, pay-day loans or cash advances on credit cards or steal. According to psychiatrist Dr. Jon Grant, addiction depends on a person's vulnerability, which is affected by genetics, trauma and depression, among other factors. However, addiction is not a moral failing, he says.

Conservative estimates put gambling addictions at 2% with 5-6% of people qualify for some type of gambling problem. It is probably a lot higher because those with gambling problems rarely seek help.

The Gambling Industry – Casinos were in Las Vegas and Atlantic City, then Indian reservations and river boats, then major cities and now companies like Fan Duel. The gambling industry, with help from government wants to bring casinos to our phones or computer. This is wrong!

The gambling industry has one purpose - to make money - regardless of the harm to its customers! Casino revenues in the U.S. in 2017 topped \$76 billion! They are doing this by creating truly addictive products that harm the individuals brain.

The gambling industry is adept at creating addictive products like slot machines and their newest product is technology enabled sports betting. Natasha Dow Schull wrote a stunning book, Addiction By Design, describing slot machines. Slots are noteworthy for more than their extraordinary revenue performance. The particular addictiveness has to do with the solitary, continuous, rapid wagering they enable, creating addiction in the brain. Can you imagine product designers and executives meeting to determine how to create addictive products with the full understanding of harming their customers' brains?

Gamblers use apps on phones to make sports bets. For example, which football team will score the next touchdown. This in-game betting because it creates the same rapid wagering experience slots do. The gambler losses track of losses – with the most important part being the "high".

What do casino executives say about their product? Peter Carlino, Chairman of Penn National (owner of Hollywood Casino), confessed to the Boston Globe that "I am not a gambler". I would suggest he is an astute businessman who profits by exploiting others. Astute? Yes! Ethical? Not in my opinion!

State Legislators – Ohio Senators John Eklund (R) and Sean O'Brien (D) and House Representative Dave Greenspan (R) already introduced a bill years ago and now yet another bill to harm our Ohio citizens if this passes. Back then, Senator Eklund says "My sense right now is, yeah, there is very likely an appetite for this in the Buckeye State". Really? There is also an "appetite" for other harmful behaviors - - e.g. opioids and prostitution. Ohio Legislature considers those a problem. Why not gambling? Could it be our legislators in both major parties are placating the gambling industry's special interest?

What Can We Do - Stop! Please do not pass laws to expand gambling!

Historically, government exists to protect citizens not hurt them as this law will do!

There are heartbreaking stories familiar to Ohioans, such as Art Schlichter's. Then there are other people living with the pain of expansion of gambling, like the family member I know and there are many people with gambling addictions which no one will ever know. Compulsive gambling will skyrocket if SB176 passes. Expanding gambling such as this bill will "normalize" economically-deviant behavior which is not good for our people and their families.

The state is making gambling mainstream. Common sense and research indicate it is not good for the health and finances of our people and families.

Thank you,

Mary Ann Bassitt

