

Texans Say No to All Forms of State-Sanctioned, Predatory Gambling

1. What is state-sanctioned, predatory gambling?

When state governments partner with powerful corporate gambling interests to use commercialized gambling (gambling run as a business) to exploit their citizens, this is state-sanctioned, predatory gambling. Unlike other businesses, commercialized gambling seeks to take as much of your money as possible with no guarantee of anything in return. It is a financial scheme relying on manipulation, addiction, and fraud.¹

Unlike social gambling such as Friday night poker with friends, a March Madness Bracket, the Super Bowl office pool, bingo night, or a wager on the golf course, state-sanctioned predatory gambling has a “house” that skims a large profit guaranteeing the participant loses over the long-term with wagering at a rapid speed continuously every few seconds, and aggressive and deceptive marketing 365 days a year. Taxpayers are left subsidizing losses and consequences—even if you don’t play, you will pay.²

2. “Let the People Vote” is a dishonest slogan because big money is involved.

Texas has been successful without state-sanctioned, predatory gambling, but 200+ gambling lobbyists are currently working to turn Texas into a Class III gambling state through a ballot measure for voters to amend the constitution to allow for casinos and sports betting.

In Colorado, gambling interests outspent opponents 1,734 to 1 at the ballot box. Citizens are being outspent in many other states as well.^{3,4}

Gambling interest groups spent almost \$50 million in Ohio and \$40 million+ in Maryland to pass pro-casino bills.^{5,6}

3. What is Class III gaming?

Class III is Las Vegas style gaming, along with any online gambling. If Texas approves Class III gambling, it will be met with legitimate risks triggered by the Federal Indian Gaming Regulatory Act.^{7,8} For example, Indian tribes could negotiate a compact with the Governor, expanding casinos on hundreds of nautical miles across the state. Texas would be at risk of losing the ability to govern gaming, and any unsuccessful negotiations would lead to a cause of legal action against Texas.⁹

4. But isn’t gambling a matter of personal liberty?

Texas already has freedom for social gambling (i.e. office pools for the Super Bowl, NCAA March Madness brackets, Friday night poker games, casual wagers on the golf course).

Government should not encourage or enable residents to gamble on state lotteries, regional casinos, sports betting or any form of gambling where people are statistically guaranteed to be fleeced.¹⁰ Two-thirds of the Texas public rarely gamble yet would be forced to foot the bill for the lower standard of living and budget deficits that state-sanctioned gambling leaves behind.¹¹

The predatory gambling something-for-nothing business model is dependent on addicted or heavily indebted citizens and leaves all the taxpayers paying for the consequences of indebtedness, crime, family break-up, and budget deficits.¹² This is not liberty, nor wise or just management of taxpayer resources.¹³

5. If people are going to gamble, wouldn't we want the money to stay in our state?

Casinos leave far more gambling addicts than jobs and create unfairness for other businesses.¹⁴ Gambling interests partnering with state governments have turned a nation of small savers into a nation of indebted habitual bettors.¹⁵

They lure voters with the premise of “freedom to decide,” “destination resorts,” and “new business.” Jobs are only temporarily created, then casinos and statehouses prey upon the elderly and the poor, creating a chain effect of poor economic realities.¹⁶

Texas has a flourishing economy with a current surplus of \$24 billion dollars. A healthy economy comes from saving more, reducing debt, strengthening families, inventing more products, exporting services—NOT the state being a bookie for the gambling interests who rig winnings and do not create wealth.

6. What is the economic impact of state-sanctioned gambling?

American consumers experience over \$100 billion/year in gambling losses. The American people are on course to lose more than \$1 trillion of their personal wealth to predatory gambling over the next few years.¹⁷

For every \$1 in new gambling revenue, the costs to taxpayers, DHS agencies, and governments is at least \$3-\$5 in gambling-related criminal justice and healthcare spending, job loss, bankruptcy, and other consequences. It preys on the poor, does not create new wealth, nor builds strong families, generational wealth, and strong communities.¹⁸

Gambling is a short-term solution to state budget gaps. While legalization and expansion leads to some revenue gains, such gains are short-lived and create longer-term fiscal challenges for the states as revenue growth slows or declines. In addition, gambling is associated with social and economic costs that often are hard to quantify and measure.¹⁹

7. Did the Texas Lottery pay for Public Schools and do as promised?

Annual proceeds from the Texas Lottery pay about three days of the state's yearly primary and secondary education costs, although advocates convinced voters that education costs in Texas would be significantly funded.²⁰

Recently, the Texas Senate uncovered massive lies, cheating, theft, deception, cover-ups, and organized crime within the Texas Lottery. Legislation has been filed to end this fraud.²¹ However, if Texas approves casinos and sports betting, this kind of corruption would become the norm. Texans must tell their representatives—NO state-sanctioned gambling in Texas.

8. Isn't Commercialized Sports Betting less harmful than Casinos?

In a survey of nearly 10,000 adults in Massachusetts, sports bettors had higher rates of problem gambling -5.7 percent—compared with adults who bet at casinos, bought lottery and raffle tickets or made private bets.²² Gamblers who bet online had even higher problem gambling rates, 18.2 percent.²³ States that have legalized sports betting saw their residents' aggregate credit scores decrease, while bankruptcies increased.²⁴

Commercialized Sports Betting also severely harms children and changes the way children consume sports. Several states that have legalized sports betting soon after had to offer anti-gambling curricula for its' public schools,²⁵ and research has found that the percentage of high school students with a gambling problem is double that of adults.²⁶

Relentless ads and marketing have had devastating effects on children in the UK: 450,000 children aged 11 to 16 bet regularly, more than those who have taken drugs, smoked or drunk alcohol, according to the UK's Gambling Commission study.^{27 28}

9. What's so harmful about in-person or online state-sanctioned gambling?

While casinos have attracted high-rollers, online-betting has intensified industry tactics. Companies have a real-time view of a customer's gambling activity by closely tracking betting habits 24 hours a day, collecting data such as how much time each customer spends on an app, how much money they gamble, what kind of bets they place and how much they lose. VIP hosts track when a customer last used the app then offer credits and other incentives to persuade gamblers to return. Payment options give immediate access to funds that some can't cover.²⁹

As many as 10 million Americans live with a gambling addiction, and it is estimated another 2-3% more are developing early signs of gambling addiction.³⁰ Together, pathological and problem gambling may affect up to 5% of Americans. That number may rise due to many states creating more options for legal gambling, and internet gambling is becoming more common.³¹

Gambling is recognized as an addiction on the same level as heroin, cocaine, and opioids in the APA DSM-5.³²

1 in 5 problem gamblers attempt suicide.^{33 34} Also, physical health problems are related such as insomnia, stress-related conditions like heart disease, diabetes, peptic ulcer disease, depression, and increased anxiety.³⁵

Gambling is creating over \$100 billion per year in losses and generational debt.

Gambling results in family conflicts, verbal, and physical arguments, and increased domestic violence.³⁶

Online gambling is addictive, through which individuals often gamble uninterrupted and undetected for hours at a time in isolation, using credit.³⁷

Youth rates of being at-risk for problem gambling are 2 to 3 times higher than adult rates.³⁸ 75% of college students gambled during the past year; the number of college students who suffer from gambling addiction has increased by nearly 50% in the last decade due to online gambling.^{39 40}

Sports betting has a damaging and corrupt effect on sports and encourages a culture of young people to think of competition in terms of bets and odds.

Crime increases greatly with state sanctioned, predatory gambling.⁴¹

State-sanctioned gambling is exempt from truth-in-advertising laws enforced by the Federal Trade Commission, enjoying much latitude in advertisement, exaggerating chances of winning and aggressively luring citizens.⁴²

Gambling violates many biblical principles; it further burdens those already in financial difficulty resulting in serious consequences for families.^{43 44}

ACTION ITEM:

Please contact Governor Abbott, Lt. Governor Patrick, Speaker Burrows, and your Texas Senator and House Representative and let them know you do not want Texas to become a state-sanctioned predatory gambling state.

You can find out who represents you and their contact information at <https://wrm.capitol.texas.gov/home>.

Footnotes

¹ Stop Predatory Gambling, FAQ's, <https://www.stoppredatorygambling.org/frequently-asked-questions/>

² Ibid.

² Stop Predatory Gambling, A Briefing on Casinos for Georgia Leaders, 2017, <https://concernedwomen.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/2017-Stop-Predatory-Gambling-Georgia-Brief-on-Casinos.pdf>

³ Ibid.

⁴ Anne Bauer, Never a Sure Bet, National Institute on Money in State Politics, October 28, 2009, <https://stoppredatorygambling.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/Never-A-Sure-Bet-Report-from-National-Institute-on-Money-in-State-Politics.pdf>

⁵ Ballotpedia, Ohio Casino Approval referendum, Question 3, 2009, [https://ballotpedia.org/Ohio_Issue_3_Casino_Authorization_and_Tax_Distribution_Initiative_\(2009\)](https://ballotpedia.org/Ohio_Issue_3_Casino_Authorization_and_Tax_Distribution_Initiative_(2009))

⁶ J. Freedom du Lac and John Wagner, The Washington Post, MGM gets the deal for Maryland's sixth casino, December 20, 2013, https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/mgm-gets-the-nod-to-build-marylands-sixth-casino-at-national-harbor-in-prince-georges/2013/12/20/059e7276-693e-11e3-a0b9-249bbb34602c_story.html

⁷ Code of Federal Regulations, Title 25, January 12, 2023, <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-25/chapter-III/subchapter-A/part-502/section-502.4>

⁸ Cornell Law School, 25 U.S. Code § 2710 - Tribal Gaming Ordinances, <https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/25/2710>

⁹ Snell and Wilmer, Ninth Circuit Holds California Negotiated State-Tribal Gaming Compacts in Bad Faith, August 18, 2022, <https://www.swlaw.com/publications/legal-alerts/ninth-circuit-holds-california-negotiated-state-tribal-gaming-compacts-in-bad-faith>

¹⁰ Stop Predatory Gambling, The Spectacular Failure of Government-Sanctioned Gambling, <https://www.stoppredatorygambling.org/tag/the-spectacular-failure-of-government-sanctioned-gambling/>

¹¹ Stop Predatory Gambling, Frequently Asked Questions, <https://www.stoppredatorygambling.org/frequently-asked-questions/>

¹² Stop Predatory Gambling, What is Predatory Gambling? <https://www.stoppredatorygambling.org/what-is-predatory-gambling/>

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Arkansas Faith & Ethics Council, Predatory Gambling Lies, <https://arfaith.org/predatory-gambling-lies/>

¹⁶ Michael Brendan Dougherty, Do you want to increase crime, poverty, and addiction in your area? Build a casino, January 10, 2015, <https://theweek.com/articles/444009/want-increase-crime-poverty-addiction-area-build-casino>

¹⁷ Stop Predatory Gambling, The American people are on course to lose \$1 trillion over the next 8 years, <https://www.stoppredatorygambling.org/the-american-people-on-a-collision-course-to-lose-more-than-1-trillion-over-the-next-eight-years-testimony-of-les-bernal-before-congress/>

¹⁸ John Kindt, Economic, Business, and Legal Studies at Emory, Mercer, U.Ga. & U.S. Universities Conclude: Georgia Casinos & Online Gambling Would Increase Gambblings 'ABCS-Addictions, Bankruptcies, Crime, Sex-Trafficking & Suicides, <https://gabaptist.egnyte.com/dl/YGzUY5Z5sp>

¹⁹ Lucy Dadayan, State Revenues From Gambling Short-Term Relief, Long-Term Disappointment, The Blinken Report, Nelson A. Rockefeller Institute of Government, April 2016, page 24, https://rockinst.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/2016-04-12-Blinken_Report_Three-min.pdf

²⁰ Dallas Business Journal reported that 1.4 billion was used from the Texas lottery to go to the state education fund in 2018, and according to the Texas Education Agency, funding the state's public school system cost Texans almost 21 billion dollars that year. The lottery would have made up 7%. However, Texas Tribune reported that in 2018, 52.3 billion in state and local money went to our public education system. In this case, 1.4 billion from the Texas lottery would make up 2.67% of education funding., <https://www.bizjournals.com/dallas/news/2019/02/01/does-the-texas-lottery-still-support-education.html>, <https://www.texastribune.org/2019/02/15/texas-school-funding-how-it-works/>

²¹ Senator Bob Hall, Capitol Hall Report, February, 2025, <https://mailchi.mp/senatorbobhall/texas-senate-passes-senate-bill-28?e=8e903d1a7e>

²² Rachel A. Volberg et al., Gambling and Problem Gambling in Massachusetts: Results of a Baseline Population Survey, 52 University of Massachusetts School of Public Health and Health Sciences (May 28, 2015), http://www.umass.edu/seigma/sites/default/files/SEIGMA%20Baseline%20Survey%20Report_Final.pdf.

²³ Ibid

²⁴ Rob Wile, NBC News, Sports gambling takes a toll on Americans' checkbooks, research shows, August 24, 2024, https://www.nbcnews.com/business/consumer/online-sports-gambling-bankrupting-households-reducing-savings-rcna167235?fbclid=IwY2xjawljJ7hleHRuA2FibQIxMQABHSbc6m9W1bVPeOhkfebVg3YXwhPxib3zxMhfOhS8Hez3HDzMAI4pEe-MFA_aem_cZPJnnK6Amgkx2NHse9wRQ

²⁵ GGB News Executive Summary, May 14, 2023 ,Several States Introduce Anti-Gambling Addiction Education, <https://ggbnews.com/article/several-states-introduce-anti-gambling-addiction-education/>

²⁶ Marsha Mercer, Education Week, States Tackle Teenage Gambling as Sports Betting Grows, July 13, 2022, <https://www.edweek.org/leadership/states-tackle-teenage-gambling-as-sports-betting-grows/2022/07>

²⁷"Young People and Gambling," UK Gambling Commission 2018 Report, <https://www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk/PDF/survey-data/YoungPeople-and-Gambling-2018-Report.pdf>

²⁸ Stop Predatory Gambling, Fight for Compassion and Fairness for All Citizens: Why Rejecting Commercialized Sports Gambling Helps Break America's Big Losing Streak, <https://www.stoppredatorygambling.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/2019-Fact-Sheet-on-Commercialized-Sports-Gambling.pdf>

²⁹ Wallstreet Journal, A Psychiatrist Tried to Quit Gambling. Betting Apps Kept Her Hooked,February 18, 2024, <https://www.stoppredatorygambling.org/the-psychiatrist-who-understands-addiction-yet-online-gambling-operators-still-got-her-hooked-on-gambling/>

³⁰Denise-Marie Griswold, LCAS, Gambling Addiction Facts and Statistics, The Recovery Village, May 02, 2022, <https://www.therecoveryvillage.com/process-addiction/compulsive-gambling/gambling-statistics/>

³¹National Institutes of Health, When the Stakes Turn Toxic, Learn About Problem Gambling, May 2011<https://newsinhealth.nih.gov/2011/05/when-stakes-turn-toxic>

³²American Psychiatric Association, What is a Gambling Disorder?[https://www.psychiatry.org/patients-families/gambling-disorder/what-is-gambling-disorder#:~:text=Frequent%20thoughts%20about%20gambling%20\(such,cut%20down%20or%20stop%20gambling.](https://www.psychiatry.org/patients-families/gambling-disorder/what-is-gambling-disorder#:~:text=Frequent%20thoughts%20about%20gambling%20(such,cut%20down%20or%20stop%20gambling.)

³³Jon Doss, ABC 5 News Cleveland, Problem gamblers have highest suicide rate of any addiction disorder, studies show, Sep 09, 2021, <https://www.news5cleveland.com/news/local-news/problem-gamblers-have-highest-suicide-rate-of-any-addiction-disorder-studies-show>

³⁴Daniel Martin and Tom Witherow, Daily Mail, A Gambling Suicide Everyday: Shocking report finds 2m families blighted by problem gambling and 50,000 children are addicted, July 1, 2020, <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8481115/A-gambling-suicide-day-Shocking-report-finds-2m-families-blighted-problem-gambling.html>

³⁵Timothy Fong, American Association for the Advancement of Science, Sports Betting and Problem Gambling, March 9, 2022, <https://www.sciline.org/mental-health/sports-problem-gambling/>

³⁶Ibid

³⁷Federal Trade Commission, FTC Warns Consumers about Online Gambling and Children, June 26, 2002,<https://www.ftc.gov/news-events/news/press-releases/2002/06/ftc-warns-consumers-about-online-gambling-children>

³⁸University of Maryland School of Medicine, College Gambling Facts and Statistics, <https://www.mdproblemgambling.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/College-Gambling-Facts-and-Statistics-Fact-Sheet-2015.pdf> and National Council on Problem Gambling, High School Gambling Factsheet, https://www.ncpgambling.org/files/HS_Fact_Sheet.pdf

³⁹New York State Problem Gambling Resource Centers, College Students & Gambling, August 3, 2022, <https://nyproblemgamblinghelp.org/blog/college-students-gambling/>

⁴⁰National Center for Responsible Gaming, Gambling on College Campuses, <https://www.collegegambling.org/cg-topics/facts-and-stats>

⁴¹Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities, Gambling and Crime, https://dbhdd.georgia.gov/sites/dbhdd.georgia.gov/files/imported/DBHDD/AD/Gambling/PG_%20Crime_09_11.pdf

⁴²Stop Predatory Gambling, Lottery Advertising: The Pathology of Hope, <https://www.stoppredatorygambling.org/state-lottery-advertising/>

⁴³ERLC, Why Christians should oppose gambling, September 16, 2022, <https://erlc.com/resource/why-christians-should-oppose-gambling/>

⁴⁴Mike Griffin, Why a Christian Should not Gamble, Georgia Baptist Mission Board, <https://gabaptist.egnyte.com/dl/d30AzyvgJ0>