

# Ten Reasons to Oppose Expanding Casino Gambling To Hartford or Fairfield Counties

**1. Societal Costs.** Opening a casino in either Hartford County or Fairfield County would dramatically expand casino gambling in Connecticut, leading to an increase in gambling addiction and the problems that accompany it. According to the UConn School of Medicine, the growing gambling epidemic is hitting lower socioeconomic groups the hardest and the resulting societal costs are being borne by employers, law enforcement, social welfare agencies, and the health care system.

**2. Economic Costs.** A Hartford area convenience casino would target Connecticut residents, while a Fairfield County casino's potential for drawing New Yorkers has declined greatly with the opening of three machine gambling casinos in Metropolitan New York. As a result, the taxes and jobs produced by a Hartford or Fairfield County casino would be paid for overwhelmingly by the gambling losses of Connecticut residents, leaving them with less to spend on other areas of the state's economy and, according to economists, merely redistributing existing money within the state without creating economic growth.

**3. Compact Costs.** Permitting the Mashantucket Pequot and Mohegan Tribes to open an off-reservation casino could trigger a provision of the state-tribal compact under which the tribes would no longer have to pay the state 25% of their slot machine revenue. Allowing anyone other than the tribes to open a casino in Connecticut would automatically end tribal slot payments to the state.

**4. Timing.** With the Northeast facing a growing casino glut, this is the worst possible time for Connecticut to up its bet on the casino industry. Casino winnings are flat or shrinking in many states, 5 of New Jersey's 12 casinos recently closed, and Connecticut's casino revenue and jobs are already down 40% from their peak. A 2016 study by the Nelson Rockefeller Institute of Government warns states that while new casinos may generate short-run increases in public revenues, those revenues can quickly reverse and decline.

**5. Addiction.** Casinos spread gambling addiction, which leads to debt, bankruptcies, broken families, and crime. The National Council of Problem Gambling estimates that one in five gambling addicts attempts suicide, a rate higher than for any other addiction.

**6. Preying on the Vulnerable.** Multiple studies show that 35-50% of casino gambling revenue comes from problem and pathological gamblers. In other words, the casino industry's business model is dependent upon preying on people with gambling problems and up to half the money government obtains from casinos comes from those individuals and the people around them.

**7. Casinos Damage Local Communities.** According to a landmark report from the Institute for American Values, a non-partisan think tank, today's local and regional casinos drain wealth from communities, weaken nearby businesses, hurt property values, and reduce civic participation, family stability, and other forms of social capital.

**8. Further Expansion.** Commercial casino gambling is illegal in Connecticut. Legalizing it would potentially open the door to other forms of gambling appearing in other states, including Internet gambling, sports betting, and neighborhood slot parlors.

**9. The Bottom Line.** Factoring in all the economic and social costs, economist Earl Grinols, the leading independent expert on the subject, has concluded that the long-term costs of casinos typically outweigh their economic benefits by more than 3-1.

**10. Casinos Not a Solution.** New Jersey has had more experience with casinos than any state in the Northeast. On November 8, 2016 its residents voted 4-1 against a proposal to expand casino gambling beyond Atlantic City, reflecting the view that casinos have become an economic and social dead end for New Jersey. They have become a dead end for our state as well. Encouraging people to lose their money is not a solution for the economic challenges Connecticut faces.

## **The Coalition Against Casino Expansion in Connecticut**

[www.nomorecasinosinct.org](http://www.nomorecasinosinct.org) - *Nomorecasinosinct* on Facebook

Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ – Connecticut Catholic Conference -- Episcopal Church in Connecticut – Connecticut League of Women Voters – 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

Contact: Michele Mudrick 860 796-3822 [MicheleM@ctucc.org](mailto:MicheleM@ctucc.org)