

MASSACHUSETTS CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

PRESS RELEASE

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MCC Response to Governor Patrick's Announcement on Expanded Gambling in Massachusetts

Governor Patrick's decision to support the expansion of gambling in the Commonwealth is disappointing and a cause for deep concern.

The Governor himself acknowledges in his announcement today that the expanded gambling he proposes will cause additional hardships for individuals and families. He states that "gambling addiction increases within the areas surrounding a casino." He also notes that "increases in drug and alcohol abuse, personal bankruptcy and even domestic violence have been documented." The Governor affirms that "the impact on an affected individual or families can be devastating." He thus appears to accept the social problems associated with casino gambling as a "cost of doing business" by proposing to set aside some of the Commonwealth's casino income for treatment.

The Governor's proposal for expanded gambling is not good government. By endorsing casino gambling, the Commonwealth will be creating a new population of addicted gamblers. The harm will reach far beyond individual gamblers by affecting their spouses, children, dependents, employers and the community in which they live.

Government should promote the common good with the best interests of all citizens in mind. It is not "good economic policy" to increase the Commonwealth's income at a cost that involves the personal well being of its citizens.

The Legislature should reject the Governor's proposal for expanded gambling.

The Massachusetts Catholic Conference is the public policy office for the Roman Catholic Bishops of the Archdiocese of Boston, and the Dioceses of Fall River, Springfield, and Worcester.

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