

CITIZENS AGAINST EXPANDED GAMBLING



MEDIA ADVISORY
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“Take a Gambling Break and Bank Your Money” Spreads Across America on Saturday, September 29

Gambling Operators Are Called On to Turn Off Their Lottery Terminals and Gambling Machines for a Day; Citizens Urged to Save Money in a Bank or Credit Union

Citizens Against Expanded Gambling, a Wisconsin based grassroots organization, joins in the national campaign to “take a gambling break and bank your money” day.

WHAT:

1. If you buy state lottery tickets, use electronic gambling machines, or gamble at regional casinos, stop for one day. Take the money you would have risked and put it into a bank or credit union account. Open a new account if you want.
2. Any store, restaurant or regional casino operator that offers lottery tickets, electronic gambling machines, or any other form of gambling, is asked to stop for one day on September 29.
3. If you have a loved one or a good friend who is an active gambler, be a sponsor for one day on September 29. As a sponsor, your role is to help your loved one or friend stay away from gambling for the day, encourage them to put the money they would have risked into a bank or credit union (if they don't have an account, show them how to create one,) and help them participate in other activities to substitute for gambling.

WHY:

1. To spotlight the millions of ordinary citizens and their families who have been harmed by government-sanctioned gambling. This growing campaign first began in Oregon more than 20 years ago out of the work of Ronda Hatefi, a member of Stop Predatory Gambling. Ronda's brother Bobby Hafemann took his life because he became addicted to electronic gambling machines pushed by Oregon state government. Every year on September 29th, her late brother's birthday, Ronda has organized a day to spotlight the serious harm the state's gambling machines were having on citizens.
2. To awaken the public conscience about how the widespread promotion and availability of extreme forms of commercialized gambling is a major factor behind the financial hardship and unfairness of opportunity facing millions of American families today.
3. To educate Americans on the truth that financial security occurs most often from the act of regularly saving small sums of money over the long-term.
4. To give families and friends a way to start a conversation about gambling with the people they love.
5. To offer an opportunity for gambling operators to acknowledge they have a duty of care for citizens.

KEY FACTS

- **Americans are expected to lose \$118 billion of their personal wealth to government sanctioned gambling in 2018ⁱ.** Many of these citizens suffered life-changing financial losses.

- **Citizens who are financially desperate look to government-sanctioned gambling as a way to improve their lives and help them escape their financial conditionⁱⁱ.** It's become a Hail Mary investment strategy, one that dooms them to inevitable failure and personal debt. This is a critical issue because asset-building, the opposite of commercialized gambling, is almost non-existent for nearly half of the nation's population.
- **The health of millions of Americans has been severely harmed because of the dangerous practices of government-sanctioned gambling.** At least 1 out of every 20 citizens has had their lives turned upside down because they became gambling addictedⁱⁱⁱ. This figure doesn't account for the several people close to them, like family, friends, and co-workers, whose lives also have been diminished.
- **Because of government-sanctioned gambling, all taxpayers, regardless whether they ever gamble, end up paying higher taxes for less services, and the state ends up with worse budget problems over the long term.** It's the ultimate budget gimmick^{iv}. You pay even if you don't play.
- **Wrongly exempt from truth-in-advertising laws, government-sanctioned gambling is an antiquated, outdated policy and a relic of past failures of leadership. Each year state governments spend more than \$1 billion of public money marketing gambling to the most financially disadvantaged citizens.** The state's gambling monopolies are exempt from truth-in-advertising laws, allowing them to grossly exaggerate the chances of winning and lure citizens into losing their money on gambling games that they are mathematically guaranteed to get fleeced^v.
- **The nation's political elite - from both political parties- have transformed gambling from a private and local activity into the daily public voice of state government,** such that ever increasing appeals to gamble, and ever-expanding opportunities to gamble, now constitute the main ways that our state governments communicate with us on a daily basis. Nothing else comes even close.

Citizens Against Expanded (CAEG) was formed in 2015 as 501(c)4 in response the gambling industry's attempts to expand gambling in Wisconsin through off-reservation Casinos, Daily Fantasy Sports and online gambling. CAEG is the only issue advocacy organization in Wisconsin solely dedicated to lobbying our legislature against the expansion of gambling. We inform, equip and engage 1,000s in our statewide grassroots coalition of citizens, employers and community leaders who share a common concern about the explosion of gambling in Wisconsin.

Stop Predatory Gambling: is a 501(c)3 non-profit based in Washington, DC, Stop Predatory Gambling is a national government reform network of more than one million individuals and organizations. We believe in improving people's lives with compassion and fairness, freeing us from the lower standard of living, exploitation and fraud that commercialized gambling spreads.

Citations:

ⁱ "This is how much Americans lost on state-sanctioned gambling last year," Quentin Fottrell of MarketWatch, published by Dow Jones Media, May 15, 2018. <https://www.marketwatch.com/story/this-is-how-much-americans-lost-on-state-sanctioned-gambling-last-year-2018-05-15>

ⁱⁱ Cornell Univ. Professor David Just, "The big swindle: In lotteries, the poor are the biggest losers," CNN, Dec. 18, 2013 <https://www.cnn.com/2013/12/18/opinion/lottery-poor-just-opinion/index.html> 3 National Institute for Health, May 2011 <http://newsinhealth.nih.gov/issue/May2011/Feature1>

ⁱⁱⁱ National Institute for Health, May 2011 <http://newsinhealth.nih.gov/issue/May2011/Feature1>

^{iv} Lucy Dadayan, State Revenues from Gambling: Short-Term Relief, Long-Term Disappointment, The Nelson A. Rockefeller Institute of Government (2016), http://www.rockinst.org/pdf/government_finance/2016-04-12-Blinken_Report_Three.pdf

^v "This is how much Americans lost on state-sanctioned gambling last year," The Wall Street Journal's Marketwatch, May 15, 2018, <https://www.marketwatch.com/story/this-is-how-much-americans-lost-on-state-sanctioned-gambling-last-year-2018-05-15>