

Statement by Faith Leaders in Greater Sudbury
June 28, 2013

We, the undersigned faith leaders and representatives in the Greater Sudbury area, stand united in opposing the expansion of casinos proposed by the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation and support the anti-casino campaign led by citizens in our community.

We represent diverse faith communities with unique perspectives, principles, sacred texts, traditions and teachings that form the basis of our opposition to expanded gambling. We are unified in our position that gambling is contrary to the ethical norms of our traditions because it negatively impacts our faith communities and the wider public.

We are convinced that casinos contribute to family breakdown, depression, addiction, bankruptcies and crime, and thus are antithetical to our mission as faith traditions to strengthen individuals, families and communities.

Our faith traditions teach us that our governments should maintain order, preserve justice and promote the common good. We believe that our governments must take a stand to promote the values of education, hard work, social justice and the dignity of labour, and reject the illusion of easy money, for both individuals and public coffers.

Our governments should protect the most vulnerable in our society from casinos that exploit human weaknesses and addictions. We therefore call upon our governments to reject gambling expansion and reject this predatory industry as a solution to economic and fiscal problems.

We strongly urge our City Council to oppose any new casinos in Greater Sudbury. We further urge our brothers and sisters in our faith communities to become informed about this issue and voice their opposition to expanded gambling to our elected officials.

Pastor Blake Davidson
Glad Tidings Church

The Rev. Dr. Robert Derrenbacker
Church of the Ascension

The Rev. Jack Fliestra
Lansing Baptist Church

The Ven. Anne Germond
Church of the Ascension

The Rev. Mike Gordon
Cornerstone Community Church

The Rev. Dr. John Harvey
Church of St. James

Diane Ikonen
Active Christians Engaging Society

The Rev. Jeremy Mahood
All Nations Church

Emily Caruso Parnell
Board President
Shaar Hashomayim Synagogue

The Rev. Dr. Tim Perry
Church of the Epiphany

Markus Rukkila
Siion Church/The Finnish Pentecostal Church

The Rev. Chris Walker
New Sudbury Pentecostal Church

The Rev. Paul Walmsley
Island Parish of Manitoulin

Steve Yawney
Knights of Columbus

[names updated as of July 3, 2013]