

Hello all:

This email is intended to encourage leaders in our community, councillors, professional associations and community groups to look into why it is important for us as local citizens to actually take a stand and ask our local government NOT TO EXPAND GAMBLING BY INVITING A CASINO INTO OUR COMMUNITY.

***Our own government*** should not be exploiting its own citizens, and we don't know how many of its citizens will have a problem with gambling. We need to take responsibility for our actions, we the people are the government, and we will be creating problem gamblers and we need to know that we are then responsible for it. We will be held accountable.

The benefits are wildly overstated and the costs wildly understated. Do the research, count the costs.

Warren Buffett, a sage of capitalism, did and he took a stand against a casino in his community. Stephen Lewis, CC, did and he took a stand against a casino in Toronto. The Registered Nurses Association of Ontario did and they took a stand. Clayton Ruby, CM took a stand.

Locally, every doctor that I personally talked to signed the petition. Many business owners, architects, artists, musicians, trades people, miners have signed the petition. Over 1000 in total so far. Many had questions, wanted to know why I started this and what the reasons were and what the studies showed, but they signed. The Michel family that owns AJ Home Hardware took a stand themselves and are asking other to do the same. They didn't sit on the sidelines when they could have.

We can live without a casino in our community. We need health care, professionals, business owners, miners and artists.

The OLG, with a vested interest, claims 3.8%. My CPA, CA training and healthy skepticism would question that. Lethbridge has experienced 7.5%. Mining communities historically have had much higher rates of problem gambling than other communities. There will be more victims as the OLG "modernizes" (ie increases revenue at the expense of the local economy) and introduces local casinos to make it more convenient to gamble away your hard earning income and assets.

I would like to see more of our esteemed leaders in our community, councillors, professional associations take a stand to protect the vulnerable and the myriad of innocent victims.

I am asking you. [www.nocasinosudbury.ca](http://www.nocasinosudbury.ca). Sign the petition and spread the word.

Jesus said "I'd rather you be hot or cold than lukewarm". The Tsaddiqim, the righteous of the city, those with vision, protect the vulnerable. (taken from the wisdom of King Solomon in the Proverbs 11:10). We are our brothers keepers. We need to be a just society.

I appreciated hearing lawyer Mike Hennessey's comments on CBC (link on the website) about his experience as being a victim of someone else's addiction. There are many victims as he made clear. He was, her family, her creditors. It isn't just the addict that pays.

Just ask a bankruptcy specialist, I did. Estimates vary but some estimates state that up to 50% of bankruptcies are related to gambling. So much so that gambling has been codified in the bankruptcy legislation. Interesting! Recently on CBC local morning radio show there was a discussion about the OLG's voluntary self-exclusion and one woman's battle. Did you know one of the conditions of bankruptcy discharge is the individual undertakes to going on the OLG self-exclusion program. So, we have 115 on the list in Sudbury according to the radio show. The OLG welcomes them back with a warm hello and calls them by name, even with being on the self-exclusion list.

Hats off to both local LU economics professor David Robinson and the innovative entrepreneur Tom Fortin. They both examined the true economic costs and Tom came up with creative solutions for conference facilities and other amenities. There is no free facility, glad Tom made that clear with options for all those people who think "what the heck, we'll get some free facilities" and that perhaps justifies the costs.

What about Dr. Abourbih and the Dr. Penny Sutcliffe of the Health Unit? The Health Unit is advising the city not to go ahead with a casino. They are taking a stand and they know the facts.

Thank-you Dr. Abourbih for sharing your unique perspective as a dedicated and caring surgeon for more than 25 years in our community. Not too many dead people contribute to our local economy, except perhaps buying funeral services. We know that the wonderful Loughheed Family cares more about this community that just providing those services. There is no doubt about that.

It would be great if some more of our local faith community leaders could come forward, especially ones that were planning of working with the city and local arts and culture organizations to share their facilities, Glad Tidings Church and the symphony as an example. I recall hearing that Jeremy Mahood had plans to share their new facility with the community also.

The only response in defense of a casino is "if you want to gamble, do so, if you don't, don't" and we will get a free facility.

Well, why would they ban smoking in public places then? You want to smoke? Smoke. No need to protect innocent people from second hand smoke or make it less convenient for smokers. Gosh, in this case the government is backing the tobacco companies, taking a cut on revenues, advertising all the fun of smoking, and people having so much fun smoking. Healthy people, no one really getting hurt. Even our Mayor realized that the first ban prompted her and her husband to quit smoking and she is so thankful for the leaders at the time to have done that. She might not have at the time, but now, she realized how beneficial it has been. To her health and her pocket book.

Then the lie of something for nothing, a "free" facility. There is a cost, there always is, no "zero interest" no "free" anything.

We will pay, casinos are in the business of making money, they will get back much more than it costs for the facility. Many of the creditors of the problem gamblers are financing this facility, so, cut out the middle man, go direct to the companies and ask for support for a facility instead of the casino taking profit, them losing from bankruptcies anyhow and pay for it through sponsorship? That was a great idea Tom.

There is a major social cost (ask the children that lost a mother to a gambling addiction), health cost (see the Health Units study), and economic cost (David Robinson, LU economics professor has studied this). And the increased crime. That comes out of all that "free" money we get. The drug dealers, the loans sharks, the operators themselves. From the Toronto Star (*link of the website*) *"MGM, one of the contenders for a casino here, has been order from authorities to leave Atlantic City due to unscrupulous practices uncovered in a scathing report by the New Jersey Attorney General. Sands Resorts accused of blackmailing local politicians by the US Justice Department and the SEC. The crime-casino links should alarm citizens, even the pro-gambling forces. Instead, we are inviting these companies to bring their corrupt business practices here."*

I saw a young family yesterday, father (an Engineer), mother, young son & two grandmothers walking. I approached them about the petition. We chatted and they are recent residents; from Iran. After a wonderful discussion about why I wanted to ask people to sign the petition, then current events in Iran, the wife looked me right in the eye and said "do you really think what you are doing is going to achieve anything?" "I don't know," I told her, "but we have to try. We are a democracy, we do have the ability to tell our elected officials what we want. We have to take a stand. I have to try to do something and I have to ask people to join with me."

My grandfather from Holland, my Mom's father, told me as a young girl never to just accept or turn the other way to what you know to be morally wrong. He stood a stand and choose to hide Jews, German defectors and Dutch resistance fighters, at great risk to his personal safety and the safety of his family. They would hide them in the haystacks, a new design to keep the Nazi's pitchforks from hitting those hiding. Starting the petition was the least I can do, and signing it is the least you can do for those at risk.

We don't know if it will be my family member, yours, a co-worker, a member of your parish, your neighbour, or just an unknown member of our community, but it will happen. I know a PhD from Harvard, a Senior Priest formerly of one of the largest parishes in our country. He fell victim to problem gambling and lost more than just money. Problem gamblers and innocent victims, we need to take a stand now for them.

If we don't get off the fence and take a stand we are all losers at the Casino.

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