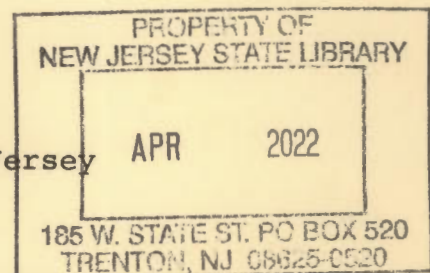


G191
1981h

PUBLIC HEARING
before
ASSEMBLY INSTITUTIONS, HEALTH AND WELFARE COMMITTEE
on
COMPULSIVE GAMBLING

Held:
April 8, 1981
State House
Trenton, New Jersey



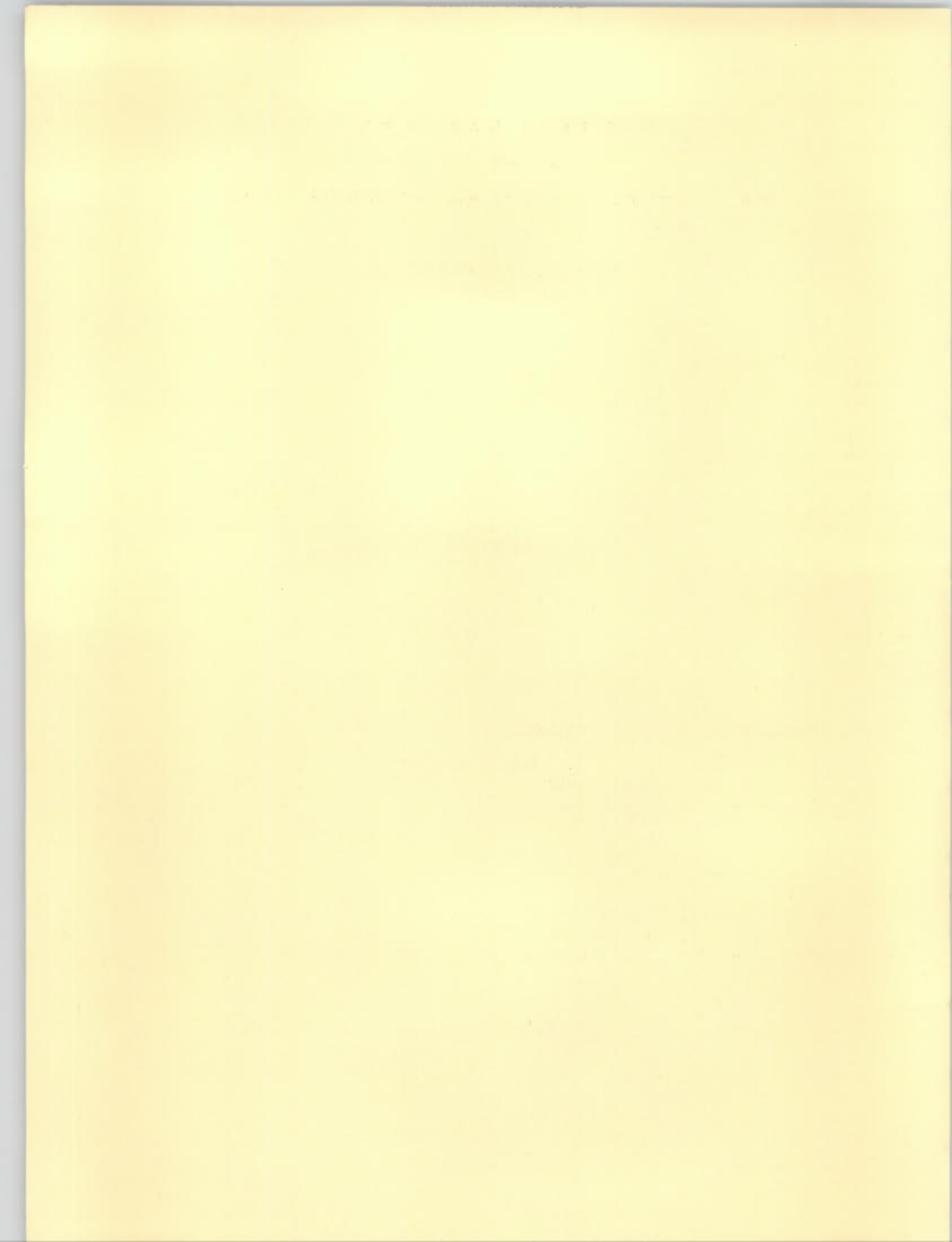
MEMBERS OF COMMITTEE PRESENT:

Assemblyman George J. Otlowski, Chairman
Assemblyman C. Louis Bassano
Assemblyman John W. Markert
Assemblyman Clifford W. Snedeker

ALSO:

John D. Kohler, Research Associate
Office of Legislative Services
Aide, Assembly Institutions, Health and Welfare Committee

* * * *



I N D E X

	<u>Page</u>
Assemblyman Chuck Hardwick District #20	1
Arnold Wexler Vice President National Council on Compulsive Gambling	8
Dr. Jule Moravec Clinical Psychologist National Council on Compulsive Gambling	13
Wilber Edwards Publicity Chairman New Jersey Citizens Casino Surveillance Coalition	21
Edward Looney Clifton, New Jersey	24
Ms. B. Gam-A-Teen	30
Mr. P. Gamblers Anonymous	32
Robert Klein National Council on Compulsive Gambling	1A
Mr. H. Gamblers Anonymous	6A
Mrs. W. Gam-Anon	13A
Mr. G. Gamblers Anonymous	17A
Doctor B. Gamblers Anonymous	20A
Glenn Reeling Professor of Psychology and Education Jersey City State College	22A

Index- continued

Page

ALSO SUBMITTED:

Statement by the Division of Gaming Enforcement
on the Problem of Compulsive Gambling in New Jersey

1X

ASSEMBLYMAN GEORGE J. OTLOWSKI (Chairman): May we have order, please? Will everyone take their seats so that we don't have any distractions. The Committee hearing this morning is being conducted at the request of Assemblyman Hardwick who has sponsored a bill dealing with compulsive gambling. There are other bills that have been introduced. We have notified all the people who have introduced bills related to gambling so they could be a part of this hearing today.

There are a number of things that I want to mention before we go into the hearing itself. I would like to welcome everyone who took an interest to be with us today. I also would like to introduce John Markert, who is somewhere in the building. He will be here shortly. He is a member of this Committee. Assemblyman Lesniak cannot make it. He is in court this morning. Of course, we may hear from the other members of the Committee as time goes by.

The purpose of this hearing is to give this Committee and the general public a better understanding of the nature of compulsive gambling. Once we see what compulsive gambling is, who it affects, how widespread it is, and the dangers associated with it, perhaps, then, we can see if any legislative proposals can be implemented to deal with it. Today we are going to hear from individuals who are specialists in the field of compulsive gambling. Perhaps, more important, however, we are going to hear testimony from compulsive gamblers themselves, their spouses and their children. Many of these individuals are members of Gamblers Anonymous, Gam-Anon Spouses and Gam-A-Teen children. The basic premise of these organizations is their desire for treating compulsive gamblers anonymously. I would request that the press respect the wishes of these individuals by not photographing them. With that, I am going to call on Assemblyman Chuck Hardwick as the first witness. But, before I do that, I want to introduce John Kohler our staff member. If you have any memoranda or anything that you want to be passed on to be a part of the record, I suggest that you give it to Mr. Kohler.

In the meantime, Assemblyman Hardwick has been quite interested in this subject, and has introduced legislation pertaining to casino gambling, and now we are ready for Assemblyman Chuck Hardwick.

A S S E M B L Y M A N C H U C K H A R D W I C K: Good morning, and thank you, Mr. Chairman, and members of the Committee, I have prepared testimony which Mrs. Smith will distribute to the Committee which will be a guide for my comments this morning.

I want to thank you for your support of Assembly Resolution 28. You are a prime co-sponsor, and without your concern and involvement, Mr. Chairman, these hearings could not be held. I want the people here to know that it is because of your concern, which is certainly as deep as mine on this problem, that this hearing is being held, and I thank you for that.

This morning we are going to hear from a wide range of witnesses who will document that compulsive gambling is a disease, and a treatable disease, that is widespread in our State. I am sure they will also urge your support for State treatment programs.

I hope this hearing will also raise the entire legislature's awareness to the problem, and that this Committee will be in a position to recommend specific action which the State should take. From my experience with this issue, recommendations for treatment programs will be controversial, because today compulsive gambling is about where alcoholism was several decades ago. The public has not yet accepted it as a disease nor recognized it as a serious problem. But, even in this era of reduced government programs, I maintain that we as a state government have a unique responsibility to address the problem of compulsive gambling, because we have encouraged gambling. We have legalized it, and we have promoted it, and thus have contributed to the problem.

As you know, our state has a multi-million dollar advertising campaign to encourage people who are not gambling to start buying lottery tickets, or if they are buying lottery tickets now, to buy even more. Our promotion of horse racing at the Meadowlands, our facilitating gambling at the casinos, I think, all indicate that our obligation is to help repair some of the damage that we are in part causing. I know the state depends now on gambling revenues. But, I think the public would be horrified if the Legislature approved a multi-million dollar program designed to increase the consumption of liquor based on the rationale that we tax liquor and that we need the revenue. But, that is exactly what we are doing with the lottery.

Last year, the Joint Appropriations Committee placed a modest \$40,000 in the budget to establish an office of compulsive gambling. The Legislature approved of the expenditure. However, the Governor line item vetoed the \$40,000 and in his veto message he questioned first the need for the program, and secondly said that if the need did exist, it should be paid for out of private funds. As a member of the Appropriations Committee, let me say that I am very disappointed that this year the Department of Health did not request funding for the treatment of compulsive gambling. When I questioned Commissioner Finley, she replied that she had gotten the message last year from the Governor's veto. Well, I hope from this public hearing that this legislative committee will send the Governor and the Commissioner a message that there is an urgent need, and that we have a responsibility to help destructive gamblers, and that literally thousands of New Jersey residents are bent on self-destruction through addictive gambling. They and their families face potential ruin if their gambling cannot be brought under control.

Recently, on a Friday evening, one of these self-destructive, compulsive gamblers phoned me at my home after I had spoken at a public meeting of Gamblers Anonymous, at which she attended. She told me how her life had been ruined almost after she started buying lottery tickets and found that she couldn't control herself. Her entire life evolved around rubbing the substance off the back of the tickets and watching the pick-it drawings on television. Her problem increased, until she was buying several hundred dollars' worth of lottery tickets each week. She knew she was possessed by a compulsion, and as a divorced mother working as a retail clerk to support herself and two small children she could not afford the losses but she did not know how to stop. In her case, she was fortunate that she had a relative who was a nurse who was familiar with this phenomenon of compulsive gambling and steered her into an appropriate program with gamblers anonymous.

If you as legislators have visited the casinos and seen the tapped-out gamblers or been to the racetracks and watched the railbirds who display a sense of hopelessness and helplessness or stopped at the neighborhood delicatessen where some people are buying 20, 30 or 50 lottery tickets a day, you know that there are many people who are not as fortunate as she was, because they are not in any kind of assistance program.

We don't know the direct or hidden cost of compulsive gambling, but we know that it is substantial. There are some legislative actions that we can take now that should not be controversial. They don't even need significant tax dollars. One example is Assembly Bill 1890, which I have sponsored, which would require lottery tickets and any advertising or promotion of the lottery to contain a disclaimer that excessive gambling may be a disease and urge people in trouble to seek treatment. You may, Mr. Chairman, have seen such disclaimers that are widely used in New York now, "Gamble with your head and not over it." I am thinking of a disclaimer along that line. Comparable language could be displayed in racetracks, in the programs, and at casinos.

In addition, Assemblyman Bassano is sponsoring, and several of you are co-sponsoring, Assembly Bill 1739 which directs the Commissioner of Health to establish

a center for compulsive gambling. I would hope that this Committee, upon receiving expert testimony, could give specific direction and encouragement to the Commissioner of Health on what kind of a center the legislature thinks is indicated.

Finally, I believe as legislators we all share concern that the gambling which we now sanction be conducted in such a way as to minimize harm to people. I would hope that the members of this Committee would express grave concern over the current proposals for around-the-clock casino operations. Non-stop gambling, especially with gamblers plied with free liquor and easy credit is a loaded gun being passed around waiting to go off. From a health standpoint, there is no justification for this legislation to try and mimick Las Vegas style gambling. And, I hope that if the measure for twenty-four hour gambling comes before the Legislature that all of you will join me in opposing it.

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, I commend you for conducting these hearings, and I look forward to working with you on this important issue.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: Thank you very, very much. Assemblyman, one of the things that you are saying that could be done immediately is the fact that in your bill there is a provision that would become effective without any cost by putting a disclaimer on any gambling operation, so the people would be made aware of the fact that there could be a danger. Is that one of the features of the bill?

ASSEMBLYMAN HARDWICK: Yes, sir.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: What are some of the other features of the bill?

ASSEMBLYMAN HARDWICK: Well, that is the primary purpose of the bill, that any lottery tickets or promotion of the lottery would some place on there have that language - on the back of the ticket, at the point of purchase for a lottery ticket, on public television, when they are having the pick-it drawing. It would be spelled out just as it is for the promotion of gambling in New York City - that excessive gambling may be a disease and may be harmful to your health, something along those lines. I am not sure what the exact language would be.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: That is the real essence of your bill, is it not?

ASSEMBLYMAN HARDWICK: Of bill A-1890, yes, sir, right.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: Assemblyman Markert, do you have any questions?

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Assemblyman Hardwick, in reference to cigarettes and when the Attorney General caused to have placed on the packs of cigarettes that smoking may be injurious to your health, do you have any facts as to whether or not this played an important role in decreasing the amount of tobacco use, or did it stay the same or did it increase? Do you have any idea?

ASSEMBLYMAN HARDWICK: That is a good question, and I don't really know. I think that the awareness of compulsive gambling being a disease is a little different in this regard, Assemblyman, that so many people don't even recognize that a disease even exists with gambling.

Such a disclaimer, whether they sought treatment or not, would at least alert the family and themselves that treatment is possible, that there is a disease. You are going to hear testimony today that will indicate that it is treatable, and programs have been started by the Veterans' Administration, and seem to work. The destructive nature of the disease and the cost of it is such that I would think that there should be consideration by this Committee or another Committee at some point on whether or not compulsive gambling like other compulsions should be reimbursed by insurance programs, which currently they are not. Blue Cross and Blue Shield would not pay for compulsive gambling. They would for other mental disorders, but they have not yet come to grips with that. So, the disclaimer would start to raise public awareness across the board, and legislative awareness that it is a disease, and it is treatable.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: Excuse me, you are saying there will be other testimony here which will indicate the effects, and some of the ravages of compulsive gambling?

ASSEMBLYMAN HARDWICK: Yes, there will be, and also I understand that one of the psychiatrists whom we hoped would attend is not able to attend, but the diagnostic disease manual, I believe it is called, the official manual of diseases, last year listed compulsive disorders as a mental disorder, as a treatable disease entity. It now has a number, and is a recognized disorder, which was, from a medical standpoint, a tremendous breakthrough for compulsive gambling.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: Rutgers for the past couple of years has been doing a study on alcoholism and they have been very active in that field. As a matter of fact, I think there is a conference taking place next week in San Francisco in which Rutgers is primarily sponsoring.

Are any of the universities or any clinics doing a study on this?

ASSEMBLYMAN HARDWICK: I understand that Carrier Clinic here in this State is now treating compulsive gamblers on a limited basis, and I have talked to a psychiatrist affiliated with Fair Oaks Hospital in Summit which is known for its drug and alcohol programs, and they are looking at it. I am not sure how far along they are.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: But, none of the universities or none of the foundations are making any studies that you know of.

ASSEMBLYMAN HARDWICK: To my knowledge, no.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: Is the Johnson and Johnson Foundation doing anything?

ASSEMBLYMAN HARDWICK: Not to my knowledge.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: Do you know what, if any, figures have come out as far as estimated numbers of pathological gamblers that we might have living in New Jersey? I don't mean using the gambling facilities, I am talking about residents of the State of New Jersey.

ASSEMBLYMAN HARDWICK: In 1979 and 1980 our own Department of Health did a fairly thorough study - which if you have someone from the Department of Health testifying, I hope they brought for you today - which estimated approximately 60,000 destructive gamblers in the State and another estimate of several hundred thousand potential who are now heavily involved in gambling.

Now, I can't defend or attack their figures.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: The Health Department made those figures available?

ASSEMBLYMAN HARDWICK: They certainly did, 60,000. And, that is why I was astonished that the Commissioner of Health, whose Department did the study and acknowledged the extent of the problem, they issued the study last year, didn't come back with the recommendation to acknowledge we have a problem that we should do something about.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: What about pathological gamblers versus addicted alcoholics?

ASSEMBLYMAN HARDWICK: You mean---

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: In the free centers, in other words, what are we talking about? You say there are 60,000 possible pathological gamblers at the point that has been identified, and I am sure there is more that have not been. Do you have any idea what that number is with reference to alcoholics?

ASSEMBLYMAN HARDWICK: Well, I have heard different numbers, one out of ten drinkers is a problem drinker, and one out of ten of those would become an alcoholic. I don't know the comparison, except to say that with the advent of casino gambling in the State - although compulsive gambling existed long before we had casinos - the opportunities to gamble are greater, and the Health Department predicts an increase, simply because of the availability, the euphoria that can come from casino gambling, and one of the reasons casinos seem to be so pernicious is that the opportunities to lose are so infinite.

If you go to a racetrack, there are ten races and you can bet ten times and lose ten times, and then you have to start going to bookies to find races in other

parts of the country if you want to keep betting. If you go to a casino, you can place almost an infinite number of bets in the twenty hours that they are allowed to be open and that is why a twenty-four hour operation becomes so destructive, because then there is never a time to stop and clean up the bodies. I mean, it would just go on and on, and it would truly be an infinite opportunity to gamble. There is just one bet after another at the casino.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: Let me address the amount of resources that one might have to be able to continue this heavy betting as you say, or continual betting. The operation is twenty hours now, and you say that twenty-four hours would only increase the potential of the destruction of the pathological gambler. Don't you think that maybe the establishment of readily receiving credit would be something that could have direct control of this situation?

ASSEMBLYMAN HARDWICK: I appreciate your mentioning that, absolutely.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: Well, you hold the sign up, and that is the only reason why I ask. But, you are absolutely right. I had a policeman from Union Township who contacted me after I started focusing on this issue. He earns \$18,000 as a policeman, and he was extended up to \$40,000 credit at the casinos, which he lost. I mean, you are going to eventually lose. He was over his head, trying to recoup his losses. Now, he lost two years' gross salary because of his compulsion to gamble and the relatively easy credit extension made that possible.

When the Attorney General testified before the Joint Appropriations Committee last week, I asked him about reports I had on check cashing practices at the Meadowlands where people can cash a check, and bounce, and they go back and the Meadowlands will let them write another one, even though they are holding one bad check. Now, that is an indication of problem gamblers, and that is wrong. One other practice that can contribute to the gambling problem that they said they would look into is that the Meadowlands tellers have not been prohibited from placing bets while they are working. I mean, they will be working, and they are punching out tickets for people and they are reading the racing form or listening for tips and buying tickets for themselves. Now, the potential for problems is just so great with those kinds of practices. We are just letting gambling in all areas, I think, get out of control.

It is really up to the Legislature. If we don't take action, I don't know who else will. Clearly, the people close to it are not showing the involvement to change some of those practices.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: Do you know what the practices are now with relationship to the check cashing, or credit extension, in Atlantic City as far as the casinos are concerned now?

ASSEMBLYMAN HARDWICK: Well, last year we raised concern over what was called the comp. check operation where a credit card was issued to people who phone an 800 number and have cash directly sent in to the casinos, which, in my opinion got around the whole idea of not having credit that had not been previously established to be extended at the time.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: Where would the cash come from?

ASSEMBLYMAN HARDWICK: Well, there is an operation in Nashville, Tennessee that would take your master charge card, if you phoned them, and it would be like being in a retail store, and they would write up a sales slip, Mr. John Markert, \$50 and turn that in to master charge, who would bill you at the end of the month. But, they would send you \$40 in cash which you could then go spend. Now, I understand the Casino Control Commission stopped that practice for a while and now they still permit it to be done, not inside the casinos, but in the hotels, but the people sign a statement that they won't use the money for gambling.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: You would have to respect the rights of individuals.

ASSEMBLYMAN HARDWICK: I understand that, and that is a sticky problem. And, I feel better they even moved it outside the casinos into the hotel itself.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: But, isn't a person limited to the amount of money by how far credit could be extended? For instance, if he has a limit of \$3,000 or \$4,000, whatever it might be, on his master charge - and I realize there are limits set when you obtain one. I know there was when I obtained mine - when you reach that point, there is no further credit extended, so that does eliminate the availability of going into a very heavy loss, with reference to those type of cards. I believe the same thing is true with American Express - that you can write "X" number of dollars for checks. But, also, that is limited, I understand, except in commercial accounts. Some commercial accounts do receive higher rates than individual accounts. I realize that all of these levels are there but there must be a point at some point in time when no more credit can be extended.

ASSEMBLYMAN HARDWICK: That is correct, if a person has not previously applied for credit. But, as that policeman said to me - I don't know what has happened to him since - he owned his own home, and they were willing to extend credit for his entire worth. He was concerned about losing his home, because he owes the casinos \$40,000.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: Assemblyman, may I ask this question? It may be too far-reaching, as far as how much research you have been able to accomplish in this period of time, but I would like to possibly address Las Vegas. I would like to address just what they have done over the total number of years they have been in operation - whether or not they do have something like gamblers anonymous, whether or not it is proven to be beneficial, and whether or not it works, and whether or not the individuals avail themselves of it, the cost of it - I think this would be probably very good information for this Committee to have, if not researched through your office, and those associates of yours, this Committee itself might be able to obtain it.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: Excuse me, I think we can get that testimony directly from some of the people who are here today from Gamblers Anonymous, and that will be the best testimony.

ASSEMBLYMAN HARDWICK: I think you will find that Mr. Wexler is very knowledgeable on that.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: We will get that directly from them.

ASSEMBLYMAN HARDWICK: Fine.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: I guess that is about all I have at this point in time. I am sure that we can develop a line of questioning that will come about with additional testimony.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: One other thing, for the purpose of including in the addendum of this record, it has been called to my attention by Mr. Kohler that we have the preliminary study on compulsive gambling in New Jersey by Mr. Rickey Greene, New Jersey Department of Health, Alcohol and Narcotic and Drug Abuse Unit, and if there are no objections, I am going to make this report part of the addendum to the Committee record.

In the meantime, Mr. Kohler, is there anything that you want to add at this moment? Assemblyman, I am going to ask Mr. Kohler to read into the record a letter from the Casino Control Commission.

J O H N K O H L E R: "Dear Assemblyman Otlowksi, I am taking this opportunity to write to you and through you the members of your committee, to express the support of the New Jersey Casino Control Commission for the establishment of the State

effort to aid the treatment of compulsive gamblers. Originally, I expected to be able to present a statement on behalf of the Commission at the Committee's public hearing on Wednesday, April 8th. Unfortunately, an unavoidable circumstance required the Commission to change the location of its own scheduled public meeting on April 8th from Trenton to Atlantic City, making it impossible to personally present the Commission's statement.

"However, the Commission regards this as an important policy question and therefore wishes to record its support for the establishment of the State effort to address the matter of addictive gambling.

"At the close of this letter you will find a copy of Commission Resolution Number 80-242 adopted June 11, 1980, which expresses the Commission's support for legislation that would address compulsive gambling. The Commission is aware that several legislative initiatives have been made on this question. It is also aware that to a degree a decision on establishing state support of a direct state program to locate and treat addictive gamblers depends on the term 'if there are adequate financial resources' clearly a determination to be made by the Legislative and Executive Branches of our State Government.

"But, the Commission supports broadly the idea that it is important to determine how many addictive gamblers there are in New Jersey, a financial and social drain they create not only on themselves and their families, but also on the whole society of New Jersey, the possible criminal impact and appropriate methods to identify and treat them. Neither I nor the other members of the Commission, based on the information available to us and personal insight, view compulsive gambling as a consequence of the legalization of casino gambling on New Jersey. To the best of our knowledge, addictive gambling is a problem that exists whether gambling is legal or illegal. However, it is an issue the Commission has been made aware of and believes ought to be dealt with by government, and government as a matter of social and fiscal policy encourages the establishment and growth of gambling as a legitimate industry.

"In a recent meeting with representatives of the National Council on Compulsive Gambling, the Commission was told that fewer than 200 of the patients have received treatment for compulsive gambling at the Breckenridge Veterans' Hospital near Cleveland, Ohio, and made restitution of nearly \$15 million in debts and other obligations in the space of seven years. We were struck by this information. It indicates not only the enormity of the problem, but also the benefits that can be obtained by weaning compulsive gamblers from their addiction and by such treatment enabling them to become income producing taxpayers who contribute to, rather than drain, the limited fiscal resources of government.

"To sum up, the Commission would like to express to the Assembly Committee on Institutions, Health and Welfare its support for legislation that would enable the State Government in the treatment of compulsive gamblers - recognizing, of course, that there are limitations on public resources. If I may be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me. I am sincerely, Carl Zeitz, Commissioner."

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: This is a very, very pleasant surprise to me, and as a matter of fact, it is a good indication that the Committee is off to a pretty good start, and I am just delighted that we have this letter.

As a matter of fact, if there are no objections, I am going to have this made part of the addendum to the report. The first one will be known as Exhibit One, and this one will be known as Exhibit Two.

Assemblyman, did you want to comment at all?

ASSEMBLYMAN HARDWICK: No, I think we have covered everything. I share

your joy over that letter from Mr. Zeitz. I think he certainly represents an enlightened addition to the Casino Control Commission. That is terrific.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: If there is nothing else, I would like to go on. You are going to remain for a while, are you?

ASSEMBLYMAN HARDWICK: Yes, I will be here. I thank both of you.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: Thank you very much. May we hear from Arnold Wexler? First of all, is Rickey Greene in the room? (No response)

Is there anyone representing that Department here? (No response)

Is Arnold Wexler here, the Vice President of the National Council on Compulsive Gambling?

A R N O L D W E X L E R: I am Arnie Wexler, and I am the Vice President of the National Council on Compulsive Gambling in charge of Public Relations.

MR. KOHLER: Perhaps it might be more useful, in addition to what Assemblyman Otlowski said, if each person coming up to testify would indicate whether or not they wish to be photographed, because that would make it a lot easier on the press and a lot easier on all of us.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: I am very glad you made that point known, John. With you there is no problem, because you are not a member of any anonymous group. It would be with the anonymous group. I think that as a matter of positive position the anonymous groups do not want to be photographed, so we are taking that positive position. Anyone else testifying, of course, are exposing themselves to being photographed, and that is the rule that we are going to make here.

MR. WEXLER: I would like to thank the Assembly Institutions, Health and Welfare Committee, its Chairman Assemblyman George Otlowski, Vice-Chairman Raymond Lesniak and the other members of the Committee for giving us the opportunity to appear before you today.

The National Council on Compulsive Gambling was established in 1972 as a voluntary, non-profit agency. The Council was organized to disseminate information and education on the problem of compulsive gambling as an illness and public health problem. For tens of millions gambling offers a harmless and entertaining diversion from everyday life. Whether they are playing bingo or baccarat, these people are participating in a legitimate, time-honored recreational activity by taking a chance on an unpredictable event on the hope of winning. For others, estimated in the millions, the simple act of placing a bet is a vastly different experience. What seems a moment of elation or excitement for some gamblers is a reality, a moment of overwhelming compulsion, a moment in which these people have lost the ability to control their gambling behavior. These individuals cannot resist the impulse to gamble. These people are called either compulsive gamblers or pathological gamblers.

Compulsive gambling is today America's most neglected mental health problem. Compulsive gamblers come from all social and economic backgrounds, races, religions, and from both sexes. I wonder right now how many spouses of the compulsive gamblers are sitting in windows wondering where their compulsive gambler is, and when he will come home, and even if he will come home completely.

Today more families than ever before in the history of this country are living with an active compulsive gambler in their homes. For those of you in attendance who don't know what a compulsive gambler is, I am going to try to describe it. I am talking about people who eat, live, breath, and drink only for the next bet. In the process they destroy their personal and professional lives.

Most compulsive gamblers lead normal lives on the surface, and yet their life is filled with constant lies and excuses about where they have been, and about the enormous debts that never get paid off, and about their contacts with loan sharks once their legitimate credit runs out. They will borrow against their pensions, insurance policies, credit unions and family savings, and they will withhold money from their paychecks and even steal from their spouses or children. The compulsive gambler is not the only one affected by this. His wife, children and anyone he comes in contact with will get sucked into the whirlpool of misery and despair and separation is not uncommon.

He is disgusted with himself and the pain of gambling, feeling useless, lonely, humiliated and disappointed with himself, and wondering why he keeps creating the pain for himself and those around him and not being able to stop. When the world of the compulsive gambler comes crushing down with the feeling of hopelessness and helplessness, they are physically and psychologically exhausted. They are usually heavily in debt, alienated from everyone, on the verge of divorce and welcome nowhere. One-fourth of these compulsive gamblers are about to be arrested. Depression and suicidal thoughts and attempts are common at this sign. We really don't know how many compulsive gamblers really commit suicide.

It is at this time that we see only four options that the compulsive gambler sees, only four options - suicide, imprisonment, running, or seeking help. And, still they have the urge to continue gambling. There are millions of Americans today, men, women and children who can't stop gambling and millions of relatives trying to cope with the compulsive gambler in the home. With all types of gambling escalating, the number of compulsive gamblers will be expected to increase, and nobody knows how much.

The number of suicide attempts will surely increase. Social and welfare loads will increase. The compulsive gambler will be involved with more white and blue collar crime. There will be more thefts, bankruptcies, forgeries and other crimes to help pay off those gambling debts. More compulsive gamblers will end up in jail. The State will have to take care of their families, of course. And, of course, more pain to everyone around the compulsive gambler. More women and young people will seek help. Who knows how many white collar and blue collar crime and embezzlements today are due to compulsive gambling.

I feel that State of New Jersey could take a tremendous lead in the way of supplying some help to compulsive gamblers and their families who are suffering with this problem in their home. Because, if we don't, may God have pity on these families. Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: Thank you very, very much. Your Association does not have any figures on the suicide numbers. You have no ---

MR. WEXLER: Well, the only thing I can tell you, the last figures that I saw reported by the U. S. Department of Health show the Las Vegas suicide rate is the highest by four times of the national average. The rate in New Jersey, and of course these are 1978 figures the rate in New Jersey, is the lowest. I am sure next year when their rate comes out, you will see a significant change.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: Let me ask you this: Do you have any figures on what people presently are seeking help in New Jersey? Do you have any figures on that?

MR. WEXLER: Well, I am going to tell you something that might give you some significant information. The National Council on Compulsive Gambling we are receiving today four times the amount of letters for help than we received two years ago. Not speaking for Gamblers Anonymous, but I know of the organization

because we send people to them, I know that in 1968 there were 16 meetings of Gamblers Anonymous in the State of New Jersey after 18 years of being in existence. In the last two years, 11 or 12 new meeting places have been established. I think that is a significant indication.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: So, the number now in the State is what?

MR. WEXLER: About 26 or 27.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: And you have a working relationship with them.

MR. WEXLER: Well, when we get people at the Council who need help, we send them to Gamblers Anonymous, yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: Assemblyman Markert, do you have any questions?

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: Yes, thank you. Mr. Wexler, basically, what is the bottom line as to your particular Council?

MR. WEXLER: The National Council is basically - we are not opposed to any form of gambling, and we are not fighting legislation, or trying to get involved with stopping gambling - interested in talking about helping people who have the problem. We want to educate the public. We want to make people aware that compulsive gambling is a disease and that it is treatable. It is not curable, but it is treatable just like alcoholism.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: In other words, basically, you are an advertising agency to bring to the public's view the fact that there is help for those that need it that are involved with the psychological problem of gambling. Is that it?

MR. WEXLER: No, we are not really an advertising agency---

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: Well, what about an information agency? Is that more adequate?

MR. WEXLER: We are an information agency. We are in the education process to help people understand the problem, just like the National Council on Alcoholism.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: How are you funded?

MR. WEXLER: Very sparsely. The State of New Jersey, for instance, I know takes in about \$300 million a year, and not one penny is funded by the State of New Jersey for any treatment, study or anything to do with compulsive gambling today. That is how it is basically all over the country. The only state that has funded anything is the State of Maryland. They have set up a treatment center in the State of Maryland. This is the second year they were in business, and they have an in-patient and out-patient treatment center.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: Well, let me ask you again, how are you funded?

MR. WEXLER: We are funded through contributions from various people, corporations, funding organizations.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: Do you work hand in hand with Gamblers Anonymous organizations, then?

MR. WEXLER: No, Gamblers Anonymous is a separate entity. It has nothing to do with us, but there are really not too many places where you can send the compulsive gambler for help. There is the V. A. Hospital in Ohio and there is the treatment center, of course, in---

You see, when you are talking about the V. A. Hospital you eliminate 80% of the compulsive gamblers, because they don't take women in there. And, most people are not veterans. Eighty-percent of the compulsive gamblers are not veterans, so you can help about 20% in there. In the State of Maryland facility, which is an interesting situation, more than 50% of the people who have attended the Maryland treatment center have come from New Jersey. The cost runs between \$500 and \$1000

a week, and most compulsive gamblers cannot afford 2¢ when they finally seek help. So, we are in the process right now of setting up a national foundation for the study and treatment of pathological gambling. And, the question that you asked Assemblyman Hardwick before is an interesting one. The Nevada Resort Association in particular is funding or trying to help fund this treatment center that we are looking to set up.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: In Nevada?

MR. WEXLER: No, it is probably going to be on the east coast. We are not really sure where it is going to be, but the first people that have made any inroads to helping us are the people in Las Vegas.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: Well, I am having a little bit of a problem in trying to understand exactly what your field is, or what your efforts are with relationship to compulsive gambling.

MR. WEXLER: Well, basically it is education. We want to show the people around that compulsive gambling is a big problem today in this country, and specifically in New Jersey.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: As compared to other states, do you have any kind of figures that give us that indication as to how we do relate both to gambling and non-gambling, particularly non-gambling.

MR. WEXLER: Yes. Well, there are only four states in the country who are non-gambling today. Forty-six states have some form of legalized gambling. New Jersey, if I recall right, is fourth in revenue due to gambling - legalization of gambling.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: Was that the case before Atlantic City?

MR. WEXLER: No, it was not.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: In other words, we only became fourth in gambling because of the---

MR. WEXLER: The lottery and casinos have pushed us way up there, yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: Most states have lotteries of some kind.

MR. WEXLER: I am not sure how many, but I think 15.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: Well, back to the original question, how do we stand in relationship to the amount of compulsive gamblers?

MR. WEXLER: When you are talking about compulsive gambling, you are talking about a hidden illness. You are talking of an invisible illness. If somebody is an alcoholic or a drug addict it is visible and you can see it. I venture to say there might be ten compulsive gamblers in this room here today, and you probably wouldn't know it. I think, Assemblyman, if I asked you to pick the compulsive gamblers in this room, I don't think you could do it. I think when they get up here, you will be shocked to see that a compulsive gambler just looks like anybody else, and it is such a hidden illness that no one can tell what a compulsive gambler is.

I can tell you that the National Gambling Commission report stated that where there was legalization of gambling, the incidence and prevalence of compulsive gamblers was four to seven times greater than any other place.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: Are there degrees of compulsive gamblers?

MR. WEXLER: Well, what do you mean by degrees, sir?

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: Are there levels? In other words, can it be measured in black and white, or is there either a non-compulsive gambler or a compulsive gambler, or are there areas in between, the gray areas or possibility areas where a person could be at one point in time and not at another point in time? Could it be based upon how strong a person's will is to be able to quit when they see themselves going?

MR. WEXLER: Once the compulsive gambler crosses that invisible line of being a compulsive gambler, and it takes a few years of gambling, there is no turning around. It is a disease that just sucks you in and you can't turn around and you can't change your mind. There is no way you can stop. You are going to hear compulsive gamblers today talk about how many times they went to bed at night and wished and prayed they would not gamble again, and swore to themselves and their mothers and their fathers and people that were dying that they would never gamble and the next morning they are gambling again. You just can't stop it. It is just like alcoholism.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: Speaking about alcoholism - and I realize this is not your field, Mr. Wexler, but I do feel that we should request from you some facts and figures as to the amount of monies that we do spend on the alcoholic problem within the State, and whether or not we do fund Alcoholics Anonymous, which I do not believe we do, but I would really like to know for sure, so that this could be entered into our hearing as far as statements of fact.

MR. WEXLER: Alcoholics Anonymous, just like Gamblers Anonymous, will not take any money from any outside people. So, you are not funding Alcoholics Anonymous. You might be funding treatment centers for alcoholics in this State, which I know you are.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: I think the question that has been asked relates to the fact as to how much money the Health Department is allocating to the treatment of alcoholism so that we can have that total figure to see if there is any possibility of using some of that money for this purpose. When the legislation is drawn, this Committee may want to siphon some of that money for that purpose.

MR. WEXLER: The State put up \$25,000 a couple of years ago to do the report by the Department of Health.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: There are no monies being made available by the industry, by the gambling industry, for any clinical purposes now that you know of.

MR. WEXLER: Well, the gambling industry in New Jersey is not putting forth any money. The gambling industry in Las Vegas at this time is discussing through the Nevada Resort Association putting up money for funding of the private non-profit treatment center. In fact, today's Newark Star Ledger tells a little story about what we are talking about.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: Mr. Wexler, how long has Nevada been legalizing gambling? How long have they had casinos?

MR. WEXLER: This is their fiftieth year.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: And they are just now coming around with the thought or possibility of being able to contribute some funds out of the gambling industry to this problem?

MR. WEXLER: I think it is the first time that people have been out there to talk to them about this idea. That is why this happened.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: Is it your agency that is doing that?

MR. WEXLER: I am one of the people involved with the National Foundation for Study and Treatment for Pathological Gambling, yes. We went out in November. We just came back two weeks ago.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: I hope you didn't lose too much.

MR. WEXLER: No, nobody in the group has been gambling, as far as I know. I shouldn't say that, a few of them did.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: It can be an enjoyment.

MR. WEXLER: They are not compulsive gamblers, the people involved.

Because not everybody who gambles is a compulsive gambler. We are not saying that everybody is. But, we are saying that probably somewhere between 5% and 10% of the population are hooked gamblers.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: What you are saying is, gambling is all right for those people who don't have the compulsion.

MR. WEXLER: 100%.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: And gambling is all right for people who don't have money, too; is that what you are saying?

Mr. Wexler, is that it?

MR. WEXLER: That is it if you people are finished with me. I appreciate the time you gave us, and thank you very much.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: Just a moment ago Assemblyman Cliff Snedeker came into the room. He probably has not had an opportunity to orient himself to this---

ASSEMBLYMAN SNEDEKER: I have one question, Mr. Chairman. I see your main office is in New York. How has offtrack betting affected the gambling situation in New York?

MR. WEXLER: Any time there is legalization of any gambling, it affects the compulsive gambling problem, because just like you see a baby carriage outside of OTB, you now make it accessible in the neighborhood, and you see people going into places to bet who never bet before.

ASSEMBLYMAN SNEDEKER: Does New York do anything for compulsive gambling?

MR. WEXLER: OTB is right now in the process of talking with their board about funding some treatment. OTB has signs in every shop that states, "If you or someone you know has a gambling problem, call National Council on Compulsive Gambling." They have been very instrumental. They have printed a brochure for us. They have been very, very instrumental in helping us.

ASSEMBLYMAN SNEDEKER: But, they don't have any centers at this point?

MR. WEXLER: No, there are no centers funded at this time. I just spoke to Mr. Kiernan this week who is Chairman of the Board of OTB and it was told to me that once we have our booklet printed and given to them, they will present it to their board for some funding.

ASSEMBLYMAN SNEDEKER: I don't know if you know this or not, Mr. Wexler, but that is one of the considerations that New Jersey has been giving for some time, offtrack betting, as one of the other possible things that have been before the Legislature.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: Thank you very much.

MR. WEXLER: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: Dr. Jule Moravec.

D R. J U L E M O R A V E C: I am Dr. Jule Moravec. I am a clinical psychologist. I am representing the National Council as well as Mr. Wexler. Also, I am representing myself as a private practitioner, a professional who has been involved in the treatment of this disorder for some time. I am with the Veterans' Administration, but I am not representing the Veterans' Administration. I think that is important to clarify.

I have been involved in the treatment and study of pathological gamblers. And, I am going to use the term "pathological" generally although it is interchangeable with compulsive gambling. This treatment and study has been for a period of seven years. I have spent several thousands of hours dealing with these people in the clinical setting as well as members of their families, children and spouses. I have been involved to some degree in research. There is very little research that

has been done. To the extent that it has been done, I have been involved in that. In 1977, I established a treatment program at the Miami VA Medical Center. That is still in process. I now go to Washington, D. C.

While the problem of pathological gambling is gaining increased visibility throughout the nation, efforts to address this problem by the gaming industry, legislators, professionals, and responsible others has been negligible. There has been only minimal activity directed towards ameliorating the emotional anguish, the financial stress, and the economic loss, both to the individual and to the society at large precipitated by this problem. Pathological gambling is not a new disorder, but what we know about it is basically new. One of the most important facts about pathological gambling is that it is treatable.

A second profound fact is that while the estimates of the members or the numbers of pathological gamblers in this nation are in the millions, the range varies from one to ten million. We do not have sound prevalence and incidence studies, but that approaches or equals the estimates of alcoholics.

There are three or four places with minimal activity in the nation where a person can be treated professionally and clinically for this disorder in the entire nation, and only one of those is a result of action taken by those involved in the gaming industry. That one was mentioned earlier by Mr. Wexler in the State of Maryland where the State Legislators took seriously their social responsibility for the casualties or to the casualties of gambling and legislated funds, albeit a small amount, to operate a compulsive gambler treatment center.

This compares with about 3500 treatment programs in the nation for alcoholics. A third important fact is that pathological gambling is truly a distinct clinical entity as it is now recognized by the American Psychiatric Association and categorized in their diagnostic and statistical manual. We have gained other important knowledge related to the problem of pathological gambling. I would like to share some of that just so that there is a clinical sense of what this process is.

We are aware of four broad, but distinguishable categories of gamblers. They are, the social gambler, the professional gambler, the anti-social or criminal gambler, and the pathological gambler. The social gambler by far is the most common and with the widest variability of gambling behavior gambles for recreation. He pays for his entertainment, occasionally winning, but most often losing. For this gambler, once the gambling ceases to be a pleasurable experience, or becomes painful, he stops gambling and returns to more satisfying or less uncomfortable behavior. He knows he is playing a game which is only tangential and temporary to his life's direction. He may wish to return to gambling, but his greater press is to return to his primary or basic life pattern in which he has found a sense of achievement and comfort.

The professional gambler approaches gambling as a business. He receives gratification only if he wins. He is a student of the game, highly disciplined, patient, and receives little pleasure from gambling, except for winning. He will analyze losses and learn from them, not be destroyed by them. He accepts losses as part of his business. They typically have other business interests.

The anti-social or criminal personality who gambles has unique characteristics. He will cheat whenever possible. He will do anything possible to win. He feels losses are due to others cheating. If he wants money for gambling he will take it in any manner possible with no intent to return the money. He sees himself as a victim. Losing stimulates blaming and violence, rarely remorse or guilt.

He has been in trouble virtually all of his life. The compulsive gambler, who has a chronic and progressive behavior disorder is different. His personality problem is manifested in compulsive gambling, which is a progressive behavior disorder and it is important to recognize the progressive, chronic nature of it. While it is treatable, it is something that must be continually attended to. It is a progressive behavior disorder, whereby an individual has a psychological preoccupation and urge to gamble. This results in excessive gambling, the outcome of which is the loss of time and money. The gambling reaches the point at which it compromises, disrupts or destroys the gambler's personal life, family relationships, and/or the vocational pursuits. These problems in turn lead to intensification of the gambling behavior.

The cardinal features are emotional dependence on gambling, loss of control and interference with normal functioning. The compulsive gambler gambles to minimize discomfort and for pleasure initially. As time goes on, the attempt is to more and more minimize discomfort and for less and less pleasure. The gambling behavior or the anticipation of such is the relief, the excitement and the escape from the discomfort. In effect, it is a pain killer, an anti-depressant, a mood elevator. It is something similar to what you will get from drugs. Winning and losing are not significant factors. The action or the gambling itself is the essential ingredient. Winning is the objective, not to keep what is won, but to assure continued gambling. There is not fun, relaxation, or recreation as with the social gambler. The pathological gambler cannot stop. His life centers around gambling and other aspects of his life gradually diminish in significance and importance. Ultimately, other aspects of his life become intolerable and devoid of emotional concern and response. With heavy losses, there is depression and remorse. The only relief he sees is to return to gambling. The consequences become insignificant. Gambling has become his reality, his world, his existence. My using the term "his" is just generic, because this is also applicable to females.

To not gamble means despair, because he feels he cannot exist without gambling. The compulsive gambler develops an irrational optimism which is based significantly on previous big wins and bail-outs. Big wins establish that it can occur. He is protected from reality from bail-outs. Bail-outs are when a family member or someone will pay off the debt and the person is back into the gambling scene, free and clear. This gives him the illusion that nothing painful can really happen to him. Nothing will stop the compulsive gambler, unless the consequences of his behavior finally induces the pain which surpasses this internal discomfort that underlies the desire to gamble.

Once the external pain is removed through whatever bail-outs or activities may occur, the pathological gambler is once again vulnerable to return. Without treatment that inevitably will happen. The negative consequences of gambling can make the compulsive gambler stop for a short period of time, but he cannot stay stopped, unless an adequate substitute for that feeling gambling provides is developed. That happens in treatment. That is the primary focus of treatment. Punishment is ineffective, since it rarely is as painful as the personal internal discomfort that supports this kind of behavior.

Punishment provides no substitute. The rehabilitation and the compulsive gambler requires three things. That is the kind of thing that will occur in treatment. First, stop gambling; second, make restitution; and thirdly, follow the treatment regime. If he does not stop gambling, he will not think rationally. Gambling tends to impair judgment. So, he cannot learn, grow, solve problems or make rational decisions if he continues to gamble.

If he does not make emotional and financial restitution, he has no true remorse, and is free of the consequences of his gambling behavior. He is actually encouraged to be irresponsible if he does not take care and make restitution. Treatment, in part, is directed towards the search and finding of constructive substantive behavior, or substitute behavior for gambling. Frequently that may be directing it into some other kind of compulsive behavior such as work. That is not the ultimate, though, because that still is a pathology.

Failure to pursue all three of these delineated actions leaves the compulsive gambler exceedingly vulnerable. It is this group, the fourth group, the compulsive gambler that we are all interested in, and that I personally feel the greatest commitment to, because excessive gambling reduces the overall quality of human existence for those who manifest its disorder. Additionally, the dysfunctional behavior of those who gamble compulsively results in the emotional upheaval of the gambler's family, as well as imposing enormous economic loss on the society at large. Therefore, it is essential to develop programs which can effectively treat and arrest the progress of this psychologically debilitating disorder.

The realization of a recovery process is often contingent upon the success of early treatment, which, in turn is often dependent upon the availability of such treatment. With the trend towards the legalization of gambling in states and localities, as Mr. Wexler mentioned, 46 states now legalized gambling, an increase in the incidence of compulsive gambling can be anticipated. It is suggested that the New Jersey Legislature, while enacting laws to govern gambling, concurrently provide for the establishment of treatment programs. It is also suggested that legislators, mental health professionals and interested others - while desiring to establish treatment programs - avoid the establishment of inadequately planned or funded programs.

A compulsive gambler treatment program, poorly or incompletely planned, or insufficiently funded is inviting failure. Unfortunately, this failure, I believe, is more likely to reflect adversely on the compulsive gambler than on the treatment program. I must add that I am not opposed to legalized gambling. I do not see the problem with which I am concerned to be gambling, but rather the gambler. It is my concern about the treatment of these gambling casualties that brings me here. To legislate gambling for its many positive aspects, without paying attention to those who gamble, maladaptively, would seem socially irresponsible.

The emphasis must first be placed upon the well-being of those who gamble, consumer, and then the entrepreneurs, and the governmental revenue resource can be considered. To do otherwise would most certainly seem to be a violation of our social responsibility to our constituency. Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: Thank you very much, Dr. Moravec. From your testimony, I get the impression that you regard compulsive gambling as a psychological disability, that it does not have any physiological signs. Am I correct in assuming that?

DR. MORAVEC: To a large extent you are. I think that there is the physiological kind of rush and excitement for the adrenalin flows and so forth, so there is a counterpart that is not dissimilar from a peak experience induced by other kinds of activities.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: So that in the treatment it is mostly psychological and not physiologic.

DR. MORAVEC: That is correct.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: The purpose of those questions leads to the following questions. In New Jersey at the present time, we have a number of comprehensive mental health centers that are set up. In these comprehensive mental health centers,

they are supposed to treat a wide range of maladies, both physiological and psychological. For example, the alcoholic finds treatment available in the comprehensive mental health center. Why can't the comprehensive mental health center have treatment available for the compulsive gambler?

DR. MORAVEC: I think that type of environment could --- I think, though, it would require a commitment of the administration of that kind of a facility and two or three identified experts who have been trained in the treatment of this unique population. I think that kind of thing can happen, and I think that may be the least expensive approach to take.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: What I am saying is, the umbrella is there. It is a matter of fitting in this particular kind of illness, so that whatever is done, it seems to me--- I don't know if you agree, but that was my next question. It seems to me that any bill designed to treat this subject certainly should consider the availability of the comprehensive mental health center and how that would fit into the treatment of this particular compulsion.

DR. MORAVEC: Yes, it is my opinion in terms of cost effectiveness and cost efficiency, which is certainly important in this day of stockman fever, that that kind of resource be utilized. In the Veteran's Administration, although I am not representing them, the program I established in Miami did in fact build upon the existing substance abuse program within the medical center. That is, the inpatients were integrated into an ongoing treatment program of alcohol and drug abusers. The outpatient program was separate, but I trained mental health professionals myself in the unique characteristics and personality traits and the treatment approach so it could be done there.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: Yes, that would be one aspect. Secondly, Gamblers Anonymous are increasing their activity and as a matter of fact increasing the number of centers that they have, the number of meeting places. I regard this as a very, very effective approach. What is your thinking about that?

DR. MORAVEC: Well, I certainly think it has been the only substantive approach across the country so far, but they are not professionals. And, that is---

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: That is what makes them effective and makes them good? They don't have the professional help to screw it up in some cases.

DR. MORAVEC: That is a possibility, but I think you have an analogy in the treatment of alcoholics. You have AA groups across the country. And you also have 3500 treatment programs across the country where professionals, in fact, collaborate, and we certainly do, with GA groups. The GA groups in south Florida were an integral part of the treatment program.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: Let me ask you this question: You said there were a number of ways of treating this psychological disability. Churches would have probably a very good approach, and as a matter of fact, could be one of the means to act in helping to cope with this.

DR. MORAVEC: Yes---

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: Let me ask you this question: What could churches do to provide the kind of release, the kind of treatment, the kind of substitution for this compulsion? What do you think the churches could do aside from playing bingo?

DR. MORAVEC: I think there are two things they could do, probably more. It is interesting that you would mention that they play bingo. I will answer your question, but if I may, just take a tangential direction.

Coming over here I passed a church where it had a sign for bingo in front of it, and I was following a green and white and blue van that had a four-leaf

clover on the back of it that said something about the lottery, and on the side it said "New Jersey Lottery Commission." And, it occurred to me at that moment that here was the industry, only it was called church and here is the industry and it was called State, and often, when we think of the industry and Atlantic City and Las Vegas it is not true. So, one of the things that the industry called religion can do is make contributions to the national council and the national foundation and help people who want to treat. And, the other thing they can do is help with the spiritual counseling and the spiritual needs which is very important, and which is something that we build into the treatment programs where we do set them up, that they will have a chaplain as a part of it.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: I have found that any number of churches have been very, very effective in treating alcoholics and in treating narcotic addicts. A good church activity could fit into this. Are you saying that?

DR. MORAVEC: Yes, I am. The differences within the gambling or the compulsive gambling population are no different than the differences between people in general, and that is that different people will respond to a different approach. Some will respond to GA. Some won't. Some won't even go into a GA room. Some will respond to a professional mental health person. Some don't want to go near them. Others will respond to a religious type. So, we need to cover the bases.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: And then there is the basic theory, you can't help somebody who doesn't want help.

DR. MORAVEC: Well, I think if they don't want help, whatever the case, whatever the disorder is, you may just as well wait. What I am saying and what I have experienced is that there are vast, vast numbers who want help and we are not helping them.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: So that you are saying that the problem lies in the basic operations of the National Council for Gamblers?

DR. MORAVEC: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: The problem is that they should make people aware of the fact that it is an illness, that it can be treated, and that there is treatment available. That is the purpose of it---

DR. MORAVEC: Well, sir, the latter is not so true, but the former. We don't feel that treatment is available, at least ---

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: All right, then, let me step back. You are advocating that more treatment be available.

DR. MORAVEC: Indeed.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: Assemblyman Snedeker.

ASSEMBLYMAN SNEDEKER: No questions, Mr. Chairman.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: Assemblyman Markert.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: Yes, thank you, if I may. Doctor, is it easier to treat a pathological gambler than it is a compulsive gambler? I tried to distinguish the two in your definitions.

DR. MORAVEC: They are the same. The compulsive term is sort of a lay term that has been popularized.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: I thought that I had a different definition or at least a slightly different definition in your testimony between the pathological and the compulsive.

How do we go about identifying them? What is the identification process by which a state, an agency, a department would basically work? Would it be the same as gamblers anonymous. That would be similiar, but with reference to the National Conference of Compulsive Gamblers, such as yourself, how do we go about identifying this individual that needs the help?

DR. MORAVEC: Well, in terms of a professional identification, the criteria for making a diagnosis of a pathological gambler is clearly laid out in a diagnostic statistical manual, the American Psychiatric Manual. And, in terms of making a diagnosis, there needs to be a substantial matching of the criteria with the behavior that is presented. That is fairly elaborate, but it is also quite precise. You will need to look at the history of the person, the activities of the person, and you will do a certain amount of demographic data collection, but the criteria is laid out as it is now for all disorders.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: It is very involved, much more so than alcoholics would be because of the visual availability of the alcoholic; you suddenly realize that he or she is an alcoholic, and it is not hard to understand that, or it is not hard to understand they are involved. Whereas, with the gambler, it would be impossible to tell if there were ten pathological or compulsive gamblers to even be able to pick them out.

DR. MORAVEC: Well, I am not sure they are that different. There may also be some alcoholics in the room, but it depends upon the stage of the development of the disease. If the disease of alcoholism is developed to a point where a person is constantly intoxicated, it does become visible.

Well, we have all known many alcoholics who we did not know were alcoholics for perhaps a significant period of their life. That is also chronic and progressive.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: They were not treated during that significant part of their lives, were they?

DR. MORAVEC: We don't know. I mean, they may have known they had a problem.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: Do we have the same problem with gamblers?

DR. MORAVEC: Yes, I think so. When it is in the desperation stage, and their home is being foreclosed upon, and they have significant evidence that they are in terrible financial circumstance, and the family is falling apart, and their boss has fired them and so forth for irresponsible---

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: It would be the same basically for alcoholics or drug users. The same program of disarray and catastrophe would be taking place in all of these areas.

DR. MORAVEC: Yes, it is a chronic progressive thing, so the visibility for the first several years may be very, very difficult to identify. But, as it goes along, it becomes very apparent, yet everyone begins to recognize that this person is in serious trouble.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: Let's get to the treatment, now, if I might. Assuming that the type of care or help that we now are able to address, as Chairman Otlowski has said with reference to our mental health centers, was expanded to handle those that are involved in the compulsive gambling area, once they were to receive that help, assuming that it is there and at a level that we would necessarily want to furnish or need to furnish, would that eliminate, or would that person be cured? What are the chances of that person being cured, or would they have to, as alcoholics, end up in an alcoholics anonymous, or in this case end up in a gamblers anonymous situation?

DR. MORAVEC: That is a sensitive question, and I am going to take a stab at it, because I am at a different place with that than the gamblers anonymous people are. I feel that cure is not an appropriate term. Cure is something that is applied to a physical problem, a disease, something you can deal with.

The pathological gambling, that is a behavior. You don't cure behavior. The most we can do is change it. So my focus is on change

in behavior. And, I don't bother with the term "cure." The idea that GA discusses, and I think they are just as legitimate in their position as I am is that you can't cure it. Well, that is certainly a safe position to take, and I would encourage them to stay with that. But, it doesn't fit into the treatment of behavior. I am not sure I answered your question.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: Yes, you have. First of all, I understand now that you feel that the behavior is really the problem and that it is not any sickness or disease, as you state, so we have definitely defined a difference there, in your eyes. You feel that the behavior is treatable, and ---

DR. MORAVEC: Well, it doesn't go away. Don't misunderstand me. It is something that must be attended to as any habit that you may have developed that you struggle with over the years, such as smoking. When you give up smoking, and when you give up drinking hot chocolate, or whatever, it doesn't go away and the desire is still there. Somehow, if it is a very, very profound problem, like a compulsion is, you have to have help and you have to have reinforcement from time to time.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: All right, there we are. That reinforcement from time to time, is that something that would be an ongoing thing within - let's say - a health center to be able to establish that type of help, or can we take that and move it into such a group as GA?

DR. MORAVEC: Well, I think it is a combination. The way I approach it is, we will enter them into, in an acute state, it when they are really at the desperation state. Treatment will consist of whatever we have to offer, and that may take a period of a few months or six months, and inpatient treatment would take three to six weeks, and then they go as an outpatient for four or five or six months. But, that would not be the end. All of the time they would be in treatment they would be encouraged to go to the GA meetings, so that both are happening. They would be encouraged to talk to the pastor, so if they had spiritual needs, they would be met. When they are discharged from outpatient, it is with a three-month follow-up. It is with continued attendance to the GA meetings weekly, and it is with as many external kinds of re-enforcers and controls as we can bring to bear, so that person doesn't have to totally depend upon his own will, because we never know when a certain situation - terminal illness of a spouse, for example, is one that I came up with. Regressive behavior then is because of this overwhelming anguish about the wife dying. This particular fellow had come a long way, and reverted to the gambling behavior as a way of escaping that. So, you constantly have to monitor it. But, it is still behavior.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: Do we get requests from families and spouses and so forth with reference to help more often than we would the compulsive gambler? Is that the way it really starts?

DR. MORAVEC: My experience suggests that usually there is some impetus from the spouse or a family member. I would say that is probably the majority of the references or referrals that I have had through GA or through some other person other than the gambler.

Very frequently, I have discovered that after appearing on a TV program or radio that people who have been struggling with the problem for maybe several years discovered that at that moment that there was something called pathological gambling. They were not aware of what it was that was happening. They didn't know that it had been identified as a disease or a problem. It is identified as a disease, because that is how the medical model works. You are going to have

a third party payment, and if you are going to put it in a diagnostic manual, even though it is behavior, you have to call it a disease, so we have that compounding process.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: Doctor, thank you very much. I appreciate it.

MR. KOHLER: Given the small amount of data that you have on compulsive gambling, how effective are the treatments?

DR. MORAVEC: We have experienced in the few programs that are going about 60% to 80%, depending upon how you define success. We have to keep in mind that that success is measured over, at the very most, a seven-year period, because that is the oldest program that we have. The Miami program is three and a half. The Maryland program is into its second year. But, if you have two or three or six or seven years of abstinence, that is success.

Additionally, one of the bits of information you have about the gamblers that we have treated is that the year previous to entering treatment they were losing roughly \$20,000 a year. The year subsequent to treatment - and this is an average of all of them that have been treated - they were earning \$20,000 a year. So, that is a \$40,000 change, and you multiply that by 100 people treated, and you are showing a net savings or a net cost effectiveness of \$4 million.

Now, I have had at least two or three dozen people who I have treated who have either embezzled or in some fashion been able to generate a million or more dollars that didn't belong to them to lose, and that is paid off by insurance companies and banks and so forth. You know who pays that, you and me and society. So, there is a tremendous social cost to this problem that we are not even aware of.

MR. KOHLER: At the inpatient stage, and the follow-up outpatient visits, what is the cost of treatment, let's say, per individual?

DR. MORAVEC: The figure that Maryland is using currently - and they had to compute this because they were invited to treat people from out of state, and they had to come up with some fund, was \$1000 a week.

Now, \$1000 a week is probably not a good figure to use if you were going to set up some kind of program in New Jersey, because, as the Chairman indicated, you could build these into existing kinds of milieu very effectively by probably paying the salary of a couple of mental health professionals who were trained in giving them an office space, and having an inpatient bed available if they needed it - for example, if someone was suicidal. It would not have to cost lots of dollars.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTIOWSKI: Doctor, you have been very, very helpful. Thank you very, very much.

May we have Wilber Edwards from the Citizens Casino Surveillance Coalition.

W I L B E R E D W A R D S: My name is Wilber Edwards from Ridgewood, New Jersey. I am the publicity chairman for the New Jersey Citizens Casino Surveillance Coalition. I don't think there is anyone in this room this morning that has any doubt that there is a problem known as compulsive gambling. I think that we must realize that gambling is a fundamental human characteristic. It has been part of civilization since man first appeared on earth. Risk taking is an essential thing in human character. Without the ability to take risks, we would not experience what we now call progress. We would still be living possibly in the stone age. Risk taking is essential.

Compulsive gambling is, in my opinion, a cancer on an otherwise healthy organism. It is something that must be dealt with. I think we can all realize,

going back to biblical times, that Roman legionnaires dined for Christ's robe while he was on the cross. This is certainly an example of how infectious gambling is. I think we are all familiar with the stories of the English restoration period where it was not at all uncommon for an individual to gamble away an inheritance in a single night, a substantial inheritance. I think all of us in this room know people who are compulsive gamblers, know a lot of the loss stories dealing with compulsive gamblers. I think one of the most outstanding ones that I can recall is a recent one of an Iranian heiress who gambled away \$25 million in the Playboy Club in London, despite the fact - and this was over a five-year period - that she begged them not to admit her to the club and not to serve her alcohol while she was gambling. Yet, this happened.

I know of another case of a small bank vice-president who lived on Staten Island. This gentleman had one suit to his name and he lived over a store and he had a fifteen year old automobile. His family lived on a poverty level. His fellow workers felt so badly for them that they were going to chip in to buy him a new suit. It finally was revealed that this gentleman had embezzled something like between six and ten billion dollars that he had gambled away. And, one of the things that seems to go wrong with the compulsive gambler is that they occasionally have a win and they always are absolutely confident that they are going to outsmart the system; they are going to beat the system. They hear of people who have beaten the system. They hear of the fellow who was a consistent winner at the track, and the other fellows who are consistent winners at blackjack. And, they believe that it can be done.

As with alcoholics, you do not get any opportunity to work with these people or help them until they have literally destroyed themselves. So, there is a tremendous rebuilding job that must be done, and it can be done only with some sort of support. I am not naive enough to think that people in the gambling business are going to support financially anything like the rehabilitation of destroyed gamblers. As a group, I have never heard of or met any group as greedy or as avaricious as those people who are involved in casino gambling, which is a field I sort of specialize in.

If they give any money to anything voluntarily, they will do so only as a matter of public relations. The compulsive gambler needs a great deal more than that. I have no way of knowing what form of treatment may or may not be successful. The only thing that I did think of one time, and somewhat facetiously, is that possibly you could hypnotize the compulsive gambler to believe that if he were to pick up a pair of dice or a card, or a lottery ticket, or a mutual ticket that both arms would fall off. Perhaps that might do the trick. I know of no other way, other than longterm support.

Some questions were raised here earlier today about Nevada. And, I think there is a great deal of sentiment in existence in the State of New Jersey that we should become another Nevada. Here is an example. This is from the Sunday New York Times dated January 25, 1981, written by Wayne King, and the heading is, "Nevada Wins and Loses in Gaming Industry Boom." But, the thing that I think may be interesting to you gentlemen is this: "Thus in the mid 1970's, the most recent period for which figures are available, Nevada had the worst alcoholic rate in the country, a suicide rate more than double the national average, and nearly that ratio for robberies, murder and manslaughter." I can also assure you that the VD rate there is climbing very, very rapidly. The question is, gentlemen, do we want this to happen in the State of New Jersey.

Now, one of the things that we can also recognize is that the more available you make gambling to the general public, the more people will gamble,

and the very specific percentage of those people will become compulsive gamblers. There is no way that that can be avoided. It follows as night follows day. This is what will happen. This is what is happening in the State of New Jersey today. We certainly should not take any action that would allow this problem to increase. Certainly twenty-four hour a day gambling should never be considered. That will only add to the problem we are attempting to deal with this morning.

We must not allow that to happen. There is another example here that might interest you. This is back in '79. This talks about when kids go to the racetrack. It is easy to get in without an adult, bet, and get a drink. This is also in the New York Times, Sunday, January 28th. This was written by Rocco C. Arciola. And, I can tell you right now that in our premier track in New Jersey, Meadowlands, children under twelve are being encouraged to visit the track with their parents in the afternoon when they have an afternoon racing meet, and over twelve in the evening with their parents when they have an evening meet. I don't think this is a healthy situation, and it says there that when kids go to the racetrack, or husbands run up gambling debts - and this is written by Myer Schrieber in the same paper - abuse does not have to be physical or psychological to hurt the members of one's family. Innocent spouses and children are being exposed, increasingly, to another kind of abuse - this time by a spouse who is a compulsive gambler or ignorant of the consequences of his or her actions. This is something that we must recognize, that no one starts out and says, "Hey, I am going to be a compulsive gambler." It is a progressive disease.

If there is any way that it can be altered in mid-stream, I think that would be great. One of the things that I think must be done in this State is to enforce restrictions on credit. I just received yesterday a very flowery letter from the Playboy Club. Apparently someone, possibly as a joke, had sent in my name and said that I was interested in establishing credit at the Playboy Club. And, they wanted all sorts of banking information, and the whole business about me. This is a very troublesome problem. You say, "Will the casinos extend credit?" Yes, they do. And, they are not too particular in most cases because they know they will get their money. In the State of New Jersey it is a legal debt that must be paid.

I think we all know the story of a fellow who went down to the Bahamas recently, he and his wife, and he went in over his head, and lost something like \$30,000. They are now suing to sell his house, or his half of the house, or else have these people pay rent to live in their own home until they satisfy that debt. Those of us who saw that rather ridiculous program presented by NBC called the "White Paper on Gambling," on December 28th, certainly saw that poor fool sitting there saying, "Gee, I owe them \$20,000 and I can't pay that. I don't know what I am going to do about it"

So, gentlemen, compulsive gambling is a problem, and it is a growing problem. It is certainly a growing problem in the State of New Jersey and I contribute that exclusively to the advent of casino gambling. I can assure you at this time were you to have a referendum, and ask the people of this state whether or not they would approve casino gambling, no vote would be overwhelming, and as members of the Legislature I challenge you to make it possible for the people of this State to vote again on that same issue. Remember this, gentlemen, nothing is forever. What we were told would happen in this State as a result of casino gambling has not happened. Atlantic City is worse off today than it has ever been. All you have to do is go down there and look at it, as my friend Dr. Sam Jeanes said, "It looks like Sherman was marching to the sea here, the same way he did in Atlanta, if you take a look at Atlantic City."

So, we are not doing ourselves any favors. We can and should and in fact we must do something to help the compulsive gambler and take whatever action is possible to see that their numbers do not increase. Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: Thank you very, very much.

Mr. Edward Looney, please.

EDWARD LOONEY: I am a private citizen, and my name is Ed Looney, and I own and operate a delicatessen and liquor store in the City of Clifton. It is in Passaic County. I am the father of six children, and I have been in business there for about eighteen years. My reason for being here is because I do have a big stake in the State of New Jersey in the past, and also in the future.

I have a written statement, and I am not going to read it per se, but I am going to add some thoughts to it. The past and present legislators in the State of New Jersey in their quest to develop funds for the State Treasury through licensing forms of gambling, have inadvertently caused great misery for some of its citizens and their families.

At the end of my presentation, I would like to offer some specific suggestions that could be initiated for the help of the victims of compulsive gambling within the State of New Jersey. The cost of these suggestions, and many of us are very interested in costs nowadays, if implemented, would be nothing or minimal at best to the State of New Jersey. I would like to mention that I first recognized the problem of compulsive gambling about 15 years ago. A close friend of mine became very heavily in debt with severe financial problems. He had marital problems and employment problems. He eventually entered Gamblers Anonymous about thirteen years ago, and through their help he turned his life around. I learned from Joe's experience a lot about compulsive gambling. Some of those things I would like to share with you today.

Number one, compulsive gambling severely affects four main areas of his life. Those areas are: himself, most importantly, and his spouse, the children and the employer.

With regard to himself, as the compulsive gambling gets worse - and it is a progressive illness; it is progressive in nature - he has increased debts, and he has financial pressures. There is lying and deceptions and depressions, and they all have a profound effect on him. He is not able to reach his full potential as a person.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: Excuse me. Assemblyman Snedeker is going to Chair this meeting. I have to leave for a little while. I would like to suggest to Mr. Snedeker when he takes over the Chair that he recess at about twelve-thirty and come back at two o'clock. Thank you.

MR. LOONEY: I was mentioning the areas that are affected. Due to excessive gambling and increased debts, he has financial pressures, and all of a sudden he starts to lie and there is a lot of depression involved around him, and these have a big effect on him. So, naturally he is not able to reach his potential as a person.

The other area he affects is that of his spouse, and the mounting financial pressures and the arguing that goes on and the deception that goes on, and the great emotional anxieties within the spouse, leading to alienations and the breakdown of communications with themselves. That is another big factor that is happening in Joe's case, anyway.

The children - and that is really why I am here. Arguments are overheard, and there is a disruptive home life, and lack of secure feelings, and lack of

attention, depressive atmosphere, and this is the atmosphere in a compulsive gambler's home.

And, fourth, the employer. As the gambler has mounting pressures and problems, he has a great need for money, because the compulsive gambler - like the alcoholic, who needs money in order to get alcohol - needs money. And, when he looks for money, after he has exhausted all his own money and borrowing power and friends, the illegal places, these all cause pressure on him. His attitude changes at work, and all of a sudden the tardiness because you have to make some moves, absenteeism, stealing, embezzling, all these lead to heavy costs for employers. So, those are the four areas that are involved.

I have some facts about compulsive gamblers and compulsive gambling. I would like to read those to you. How old are they? They are thirteen years old, and up to seventy years old. I understand from Joe that there was a young member of Gamblers Anonymous that was admitted to the group three weeks ago, in the Fairlawn group, and he was thirteen years old. He had a pinball addiction, and he did some crazy things due to this addiction in order to get money to gamble on pinballs. There are mostly males, but there are some females.

Who are the compulsive gamblers? They come from all walks of life. They are teachers, lawyers, factory workers, truck drivers, postal workers, and many are self-employed, sales people, and, who knows, maybe a few politicians. Certainly nobody here, hopefully.

Number four, how many do we have? Again, this is like throwing darts at a wall in the United States. The government did a study three years ago, the National Commission on Compulsive Gambling, and they came up with a figure of 1.1 million. So, they range from 1.1 million and if you want to take the figures of people in Gamblers Anonymous they say six million or seven million. So, probably somewhere in between will probably be the right amount. Again, these are the figures and it is brought out in one of the articles I brought, that we only can count the compulsive gamblers once they reach the last stage of their gambling, once it is pronounced. The other stages we can't really recognize them at all.

Number five, one big factor is that one compulsive gambler affects six to ten people. That is the crime. That is the real sin. He has a big effect on his spouse, his children, his parents, employer and friends.

Enclosed in that statement I gave you is also a statement from Health Commissioner Joanne Finley. She stated that her Department did a study regarding compulsive gambling and it was reported that 800,000 people in New Jersey are affected in some way by compulsive gambling. I don't really believe that 800,000 people are affected, but I do believe that it is more than 100,000.

Six, compulsive gambling is classified as an illness in the American Psychiatric Directory.

Seven, let's talk about kids. More teenagers are experiencing severe problems due to compulsive gambling. A kid twelve years old gets dressed and goes to school and goes to the candy store and there are three gaming machines for him to put quarters in. If he goes to a parochial school, he walks to a parochial school and on the lawn is the sign for bingo. During school, if it is football season, we have football tickets. If it is baseball season, we get the six hit pool. After he leaves there, where does he go? If he is twelve years old, he can't go anywhere, but if he is fourteen or fifteen, he can then get a ride and go to the Meadowlands Raceway if he lives up that way, or he can go to Freehold Racetrack, or he can get into those areas. Certainly, he can't

get into a casino. He has to be at least sixteen and look eighteen before he can get into those areas. But, do they really gamble and do they really get into trouble? I come from Clifton. Just two years ago there was an article in the paper which said, the headlines from the Herald News, by the way, front page, "School Athlete Called Slayer." They tell me he was seventeen and he had some tremendous expertise as a football player. And, the article went on to say how this widow to death to rob her and so forth and so on. But, one little paragraph which I have highlighted caught my eye and hit me in the gut. It said, "Investigators said the youth who shoveled snow for Mrs. "X" took the money to pay off bookmakers. A source close to the investigation said it believed he paid \$300 in gambling debts." That is one issue.

The next one I would like you to draw your attention to is the next article I gave you which said something about Las Vegas, about suicides. "In 1979---" We are talking now about kids between the ages of 11 and 19 years old committing suicide, ending their lives. They are not compulsive gamblers. But, further down in that there is another paragraph that I would like you to read, which says--- First of all, in 1979 there were 11, and now there are 20. According to the article, if it is well read, you will find that the age limit of these suicides are getting lower and lower, kids. They are not compulsive gamblers, but they live in a depressive situation. Here is what the article says, in one paragraph, "Chronically depressed parents are breeding depressed children, said Clayton. A child looks at his life and says, 'I am miserable. My parents are not happy. Why should I bother to grow up.'"

The only known effective help for the compulsive gambler in the State of New Jersey is Gamblers Anonymous. I would like to talk a little bit about Gamblers Anonymous. There are 28 Gamblers Anonymous groups in the State of New Jersey. They have approximately 500 active members. There are 430 Gamblers Anonymous groups in the United States with approximately 7,000 members.

Other treatment centers available that New Jersey residents have sought help for, for severe gambling problems--- We have heard from some professionals who have talked about these areas: Brecksville Hospital in Cleveland, and it would almost allude to the fact that many people in New Jersey have gone there--- Twelve people from the State of New Jersey have gone there, and have sought help in that hospital. Maryland Treatment Center for the Compulsive Gambler, three people from the State of New Jersey have availed themselves of that facility, and not because of lack of funds. That is funded by the government of the State. The charge is going to be between \$500 and \$800 a week. And, for a compulsive gambler to come up with that kind of money, he is not going to do it.

The National Council on Compulsive Gambling is their only referral and information organization. And, the Delaware Council on Compulsive Gambling - these people have worked with the Delaware citizens and have done public relations work which has spun off to the southwest area of New Jersey.

We also have a veterans hospital and you have to be a vet, though. It is in West Orange. There are a couple of beds used for this purpose up there. It is a new program. I don't know of anybody in the State of New Jersey yet who has gone there.

I would like to give you a couple of my ideas for suggestions where I feel help is needed, and where these ideas could be implemented. Those who make a living from gambling in New Jersey should allocate a portion of monies collected and earmarked to a special fund to be used for this program. Some of the businesses that should be included for supporting this program are: Racetracks,

casinos, lotteries, bingos, pinballs and other games of chance, wheels of chance, such as the shore areas generate income from, organizations that use chance books as fund raisers.

I believe if we took 1% - a penny on a dollar - the receipts would be sufficient to subsidize the following areas in this program which I am suggesting. One, absolutely you have to establish a physical office in the State of New Jersey, and you should staff them with some kind of counselors. I think the Doctor who spoke mentioned that. Probably in our society they would be very, very hard to find, any counselors that would know anything at all about compulsive gambling. That is what we have to do.

Two, the office would act as a referral agency and would also develop literature about the do's and don'ts about compulsive gambling that would be helpful not only to the compulsive gambler, but his spouse and family and employer. Assemblyman Markert mentioned this before and I think he was alluding to the fact that the gambler - and he is right - does not seek help. But, yet, why do we have to wait for the gambler to get help. What about the wife, the kids, the employer? Isn't there something they can do in order to get help because they are being affected?

Most important I think is number two, textbooks in schools are a must. There should be chapters about compulsive gambling, the illness, made available to children and teachers. They know about alcoholism and they know about drug abuse. This area has to be a high priority. New Jersey ranks first out of all the states in having available to its citizens more legal forms of gambling, but not one chapter in its textbooks about the victims of this insidious illness.

Three, research grants. I think there is going to be plenty of money if we take one-percent of the total receipts of these things that I suggested to do this. Organizations could give out public information about compulsive gambling, such as monies to the National Council on Compulsive Gambling, where they can get the word out a little bit better than they have been. Colleges within New Jersey could do more research on this problem. In New Jersey we have token people like the good Doctor from Miami who have done something. Jay Livingston of Montclair State College has done some papers and written books on compulsive gambling. Jersey City State College has recently done a report, which is available on the effects of compulsive gambling, and gambling and the public's view of it.

In closing, I would like to say that compulsive gambling is a devastating illness. It is not remote to New Jersey. Compulsive gambling ruins lives and destroys families. If you believe it, you have to do something about it. Let's enable all of New Jersey's citizens to have a higher quality of life for ourselves and their families. I just want to say that my prayers are with you people who are actually addressing this serious problem. I would like to thank you for the opportunity to speak before you.

ASSEMBLYMAN SNEDEKER: Assemblyman Markert, do you have any questions?

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: Just one. Do you feel that we should eliminate gambling of all kinds in the State of New Jersey? Do you think that would help?

MR. LOONEY: No, I definitely don't. I think that people want to gamble. I think people at certain ages should have the opportunity to make that choice. I do think that there are people who are not able to make the choice who are being bombarded with a one-sided view about gambling - particularly kids I am talking about. I think when a person is eighteen or nineteen they should have the choice of whether to gamble or not, and it appears that most people in our

society do want to gamble, for whatever reasons, and I don't think that we should be close-minded in that area.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: Do you really feel that we could direct more effort to the juvenile and attempt to maybe nip in the bud something that may end up as a catastrophe, as far as even a life being taken at a later stage. And, of course, if you do, how else other than through the family could we know of such a problem? Do you feel it could happen in any other area such as our education systems where they could be identified? I mean, I am searching. I am looking. I don't know how you are going to treat people unless you know about it, and the only way you are going to know about it is if somebody tells us or tells the individual.

Of course, when you are talking about children, you are talking basically only about the connection with family.

MR. LOONEY: I think not only the family, but also where they are educated, all the schools. Churches know about this area. They know there is such a problem.

The state could do many things with literature. Literature could go out to not only service clubs and so forth regarding--- There is such a thing as people who have problems with gambling. The dental people are doing things about preventative. We all could ask, "Who has a dental problem," and most of us would say, "I don't go." And, the ones who would say they do are the ones who have a tooth problem right now. But all of us have decay somewhere in our teeth, and if we were to be examined--- That is what compulsive gambling is like. We don't know. We have to educate, number one. And, where can we start the education? I think for us, the older people, it is kind of too late. I think we ought to do it in many areas, but the one area that needs an awful lot of addressing is the kids, children, teachers.

We need new programs. Gamblers Anonymous happens to be the only program that is effective, and it is ridiculous in our society. You know, they do great work, but it is like a little spoonful out of the Atlantic Ocean, all the people who are being affected by this.

Somebody brought out the fact that there are certain people who just can't buy Gamblers Anonymous. They go into that type of a meeting, and they just don't feel comfortable and they don't come back to that meeting. Okay, they might need a more sophisticated approach to this problem. Let's have more programs. Let's have more ways that these people can avail themselves. That is our responsibility.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: Well, I am sure you heard the Doctor speak about the inpatient program and the outpatient program, and the time element involved and just how far it can go. But, it is also something that is ongoing. It is not something that you can say you are cured. It is not a disease, basically, at least in that sense of the word. It is a problem that must be continually addressed, because it is a behavioral problem, and I am sure it is with the younger child also.

The biggest problem that we have, I think, in addressing any type of program - and I am making a statement here, rather than asking you a question, which is something I probably shouldn't be doing - is attempting to help, as a government, people who first of all we don't know need the help, and second of all that we can't get to take the help half the time. So, there is a problem. Government can go only so far in its attempt to help people.

I, like you, would pray that there was some way that we could address a problem without having the individuals coming to us, rather than us trying to search them out.

MR. LOONEY: One problem that is unique about this illness, and I think it was answered in a different manner from the way I would answer, the compulsive gambler who is doing his thing and affecting all these areas - the kids, the wife, the employer, help can be had for all those other people, and eventually that will bring that individual with the problem into getting some help. Why say, "Well, he is not ready. He doesn't want to seek help, so we are not going to worry about his kids, his wife, his employer." I think that is wrong.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: Let me have some more of that. Where would we help his kids, his wife, his employer? How are we going to help those six people he is going to effect? Let's eliminate. Let's say he or she doesn't want help. They are beyond any possibility of getting involved in any program whatsoever. So, we do have now the affected personnel. How are we going to help those?

MR. LOONEY: With any kind of public relations, whichever way you would do it. If you would do it with literature, handouts, or TV---

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: They are already affected. How are we going to help them?

MR. LOONEY: Suggest to them that if you have this problem there is an office or number you can call, okay? They have a number that you can call. They can have it in Paterson, New Jersey, or Trenton, where they would be able to call or talk to somebody and say, "I have that problem. My husband has it, and I have no money. My kids are going--- We have all kinds of fights and so forth, and I would like to get some help." Fine, you can make an appointment and sit with them and explain to them all the options we have in the State of New Jersey to help those individuals. First there is counseling.

Okay, getting those people together is the first step. You see, Gamblers Anonymous takes care of the gamblers, but there is another fellowship called Gam-A-Non which works closely with the family and the spouses of the compulsive gambler. There is also a Gam-A-Teen for the kids. Each one is a separate entity. The wife must get help for herself, okay, in order to stand on her own two feet. If the gambler wants to continue gambling, does that mean the end of her life? That is where the counseling for her has to come in. What about her kids? They also have to get a fair shot. I think a pilot program could be started. You invent it, but you at least can start it. At least recognize this is a problem, and publicize the facts. Maybe there could be a public relations address to employees who have problems with employers all of a sudden who seemingly are good individuals and all of a sudden they are whacked out. Possibly these are areas that the individual has a problem in, and there is help for him.

Give a number to call, and a counselor to talk to him and find out if there are embezzling problems, lying, is there a problem with absenteeism? Is he a drinker? Is he a drug user? If not, then he is probably a compulsive gambler, or some other things we have not done before, but at least then you can direct him. Government should not run the show, absolutely not. That is why I don't think money should come out of the taxpayers dollars. It should come from the people who are making the money on the gambler, and they would be happy to do it. Casinos would be happy to do it---

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: I happen to agree with you the fact that casinos would be happy, but I am wondering how many bingo parlors would be happy, and I wonder how many pinball machine companies would be happy, and I wonder how

many people who are floating tickets for the baseball game and the football game would be happy? Our problem, I do not believe, is not with the gambling casinos in this State. I disagree with some statements that have been made earlier to you about gambling. I don't think that is the problem. I think total cooperation has been - or I should say almost total cooperation - between the Casino Control Commission and the Las Vegas type of situation we have with Atlantic City and casinos. That is not the problem. We are addressing here a problem that existed before the casinos. We are addressing a problem that would be here, whether or not we had the casinos or not. I am sure you are addressing that problem. And, what you have done is open up another area, because we were talking about only help for the pathological gambler and for the compulsive gambler. What you have suggested is that we address some help for those that the gambler affects. It is a new area. It is something that has not been brought before us today, and I thank you for bringing that to my attention.

MR. LOONEY: I would like to make one fast statement. I think that the pinball people - any individual, if they were aware that they in some way were doing something that was affecting these people, I know if they were responsible people that they would gladly also contribute some portions of that money. I think the education is the important thing. Thank you very much.

ASSEMBLYMAN SNEDEKER: Thank you very much. Next I would like to call Ms. B. from Gam-A-Teen.

M S. B.: I do not wish to be photographed, or anything like that.

ASSEMBLYMAN SNEDEKER: All right, we will tell the press and the TV cameras the individual does not wish to be photographed and we will honor that. Go ahead.

MS. B.: I am the daughter of a compulsive gambler. I have lived with this problem --- It was before I was even born. I was never really aware of the problem until I was about the age of ten when I finally realized that my father was never around. I never had any shoes to wear, decent clothing to wear, and my mother was always fighting with my father about money and stuff. I never really understood what was going on. He was never around. My mother would be up late at night constantly crying. She would call where he worked, and he would use any excuse just to stay and gamble at his job or whatever. My mother would call, and he would have somebody get on the phone and tell him he is out on his job delivering or whatever, and instead he would be sitting where he was right there when the phone call came in and he would be gambling, and he thought, you know, nothing of it. He was too involved with himself. When he did come home, he was perfect with us. He treated us like we were gold because we were his kids, but as far as like when it came to my mother, it was like they were at each other tooth and nail, constantly fighting.

When I finally became aware of the problem, I entered Gam-A-Teen at the age of twelve, and I have been with it for seven years, and with this program--- My father has been in the program for nine years, and with this it has brought the family together. We do more things now. My father is always around. Of course, there are still arguments about money, but it is not the gambling problem any more. To my knowledge, from what I have learned through the Gam-A-Teen Program, gambling is an illness. It is not anything that can be seen or anything. It is just an illness inside the person who is the compulsive gambler. With that, it is up to him to want to make himself a better person. And, through the program, my father has done that. He has resigned himself to the fact that he is a compulsive gambler, and he always will be a compulsive gambler. But, he is an arrested

compulsive gambler. He is no longer gambling. When I ask him if he still has the drive to gamble or anything, like when he passes an OTB or anything, he says, "No, but if you had asked me that nine years ago, I would probably have said yes."

ASSEMBLYMAN SNEDEKER: How did you get involved in Gam-A-Teen? How did you find out about it?

MS. B.: How I found out was--- My mother was the first to ever attend any of the meetings through a friend of hers. She had finally realized that my father was a gambler and there was a problem with him, and the only way to find a way to resolve this is to do something about it, and she attended a Gam-A-Non meeting, and my father did not go. He thought she was sick. He thought he didn't need it; he thought he could cure himself. He said he would do it all by himself. He promised that he would stop, and this and that. My mother was at the point where she was ready to take us kids and leave.

With this, two years later, as she got into the program, she had heard about some place where the children could go and learn about the problem in the family. At first I felt very reluctant. My brothers and I didn't want to go, because I could not admit to the fact that my father had done anything like this. I thought my father was, like, the greatest man in the world. I guess all little kids do. So, I finally said, "All right, I will give it a try, and I went, and with this I have gotten more involved."

The group that I belong to folded up just recently because evidently some of the parents may feel that their child doesn't need it or whatever, I don't know. But, any child, as far as I am concerned, who is the child of a compulsive gambler definitely has a problem. It could be a problem with school work, and it affects relationships with children outside. Sometimes they feel like they want to crawl under the table because they feel that their father has done something totally criminal. So, with this, it has brought me out better and I understand the problem more now.

ASSEMBLYMAN SNEDEKER: Have you helped organize any Gam-A-Teen groups at all?

MS. B.: I am going to start in about two or three weeks. I am going to bring back the old group that was. We are not meeting now.

ASSEMBLYMAN SNEDEKER: Is there a cost outside the people getting together and having a place to meet?

MS. B.: Well, as far as a meeting room, yes, there is a cost. The meetings that are held are held in the United Methodist Church, and with that, I don't know if they pay the Reverend--- I think they pay the Reverend, but because the children of the compulsive gambler are interested in coming to a meeting, we usually collect the dues, and with that we give the \$3 or whatever we decide on to the GA Group and with that we pay for our room to have our meetings.

ASSEMBLYMAN SNEDEKER: Is Gam-A-Teen more to explain to the person there what the parent is going through and how to help him, or to try to help your problem to understand his problem?

MS. B.: Both. It helps both. If the child has any hate feelings towards the parent who is the compulsive gambler, and tries to bring out those hate feelings of the child, it tries to relax those feelings, and in return bring back the love that is missing or whatever the child feels toward the parent. It more or less helps them to come back together with the parent.

ASSEMBLYMAN SNEDEKER: And you think your joining this has been a help to you and also your parents.

MS. B.: Definitely.

ASSEMBLYMAN SNEDEKER: May the record show that Assemblyman Bassano has joined us at this time.

Mr. Markert, do you have any questions?

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: Just one, if I might. It was your mother that first got involved in the Gam-A-Non, and she in turn attempted to bring the children in. How did your mother first realize that this is what she should be doing?

MS. B.: It was more or less like my mother started and after a while my father was the one who was starting to get concerned about what was going on. Because, my mother was at that time, when he was gambling, she believed all the stuff that he said to her, like, "I promise I will stop. You will have the money." And, with this, she started becoming stronger, even though while he was gambling she was in the program, and, you know, the women in the room were telling her - "Hey, he is just conning you again. It is the same old story over and over again."

My father then decided to become involved. And, while my mother and father were in the program, my mother heard about the Gam-A-Teen and that is when the children were introduced.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: I see. And that program originally was GA?

MS. B.: No, Gam-A-Non. My father is in GA.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN SNEDEKER: Mr. Bassano?

ASSEMBLYMAN BASSANO: No questions.

ASSEMBLYMAN SNEDEKER: Thank you very much. We have one more witness before we break for lunch. And, we are going to try to get back here by two o'clock.

Mr. P., a member of Gamblers Anonymous, will you come up and sit with us?

M R. P.: My name is Mr. P. and I am a compulsive gambler. I started gambling for quarters when I was about 11 years old at the bowling alleys. I can remember, I couldn't wait until I was 16 years old, so I could go into the racetrack. I can remember as a teenager everyday going to the racetrack. My big thing is that I never missed a day at the racetrack. I used to come home from the racetrack every night and say to myself after I was losing every single day, I am going to kill myself. I would say, "If I go tomorrow, I am going to kill myself." And, every day I would say the same thing: "Today is my last day," and I would wake up in the morning, and the first thing I would do is say, "How am I going to get money to go to the racetrack today?" And the day would go on, and I would say, "Well, there is no where else I can go," and maybe some other idea would come into my mind how I could get money.

I can remember when I was 17 years old going into a bank and cashing checks for over \$2,000 in the morning so I could make it to the racetrack, and then losing at the racetrack and going back to the same bank in the afternoon and trying to cash the same amount of checks so I could go to the racetrack at night. Every single day I would live to gamble. I would call up the bookie and I would bet whether it was going to rain that day if the racetrack was closed just so I would be in action. My mother always said I had a problem and I needed help. I said, "I have no problem. I am normal. There is nothing wrong with me." To me, the rest of the world had a problem.

I never thought I had a problem. As a matter of fact, one time, my mother did get me to go to a psychiatrist and I talked to him for a couple of days but nothing ever happened. All I knew was I just kept gambling. To me, I couldn't wait for some day so I could go to the casinos. To me, that was the best thing that could ever happen. I could make it to a casino.

When I turned 21, which was 9 years ago, I got married. My wife knew I was a gambler. But, I swore to her that I had quit gambling. That was nine years ago. In a week's time I lost every penny, \$5,000 or \$6,000 that we got for our wedding. I lost every penny of it gambling, and yet my wife never questioned me about anything. I was always able to con her, and I was always able to make stories up and she always believed me, and for nine years I was married, and in nine years'time, my wife never knew I gambled. I moved 14 times in 7 different states. I was always running from the bookmakers, the shylocks, the banks. I could go into a state and open up accounts with banks, finance companies, find a bookmaker, and I could be on my way to another state, and I can remember going from Texas to West Virginia and on the way stopping to call the bookmaker in Texas who didn't even know I had left the State.

I can remember going from West Virginia to Connecticut and call the bookmaker in West Virginia saying I am in Connecticut, but don't worry, I will send you the money, you know. Of course, I was never able to send it. The things that I can think that I went through - never ever telling anybody, always living in a dream world and always lying and cheating and stealing, but always thinking I was normal. I never thought I had a problem. I was always looking for the big score. I can remember going to shylocks and borrowing because I had banks that wanted to arrest me, and I went to shylocks because there was nowhere else to go. I can remember taking \$10,000 because I had to go to the banks to pay the banks because they were going to arrest me, but before I ever went to the banks I went to the racetrack and lost all \$10,000. I never even went to the banks and paid them a penny.

I could have thousands of dollars in my pockets and I wouldn't even give my wife \$10 to buy a pair of shoes because I had to have it to gamble, to bet. Thank God, I was heading for being either killed or to be put in jail. How I stayed out of jail--- I know the next thing I was going to do was to actually steal. I was thinking who could I steal from. I knew people who had a lot of diamonds or things in their homes, and I was thinking of ways--- In my mind I justified it, and I knew I could get it out of their house and they would never know it was missing. And, if they blamed me, I could always deny it, and they would never catch me, and I was thinking all the money I could get and I could steal. Then I started realizing I was really a sick person because I had a three and a half year old son and my wife was pregnant, and I loved my wife. And, there was love in my family, and I had already taken everything from my family through conning them. But, yet, no one even knew I gambled. They thought I had quit gambling nine years ago. And, thank God, I realized one day I was sick, and I had remembered when I was fifteen years old my mother said she heard of a group called Gamblers Anonymous, and I remembered that. Here it was fifteen years later, and I was just ready to go into the racetrack. I had \$200 on me. It was my last \$200 after I had gone to shylocks and everyone, and I thought I was one sick person. Either I have to kill myself - and I didn't have the guts to do that--- I wished someone would kill me just to get me out of my misery. I picked up the phone for some reason and I called information for Gamblers Anonymous. I got a number, and I got a man on the phone, and

I said, "Look, I am sick and I need help. I am on my way into the racetrack and I don't even want to go, but I can't help myself." I asked if there was any help out there for me, and the man talked to me and said, "Don't go into the racetrack; go home and tell your wife the truth; go home and tell your wife and everybody what you have been doing." That was exactly seven months ago tomorrow.

I got into a Gamblers Anonymous room that next day, and I remember the things that were told to me. I heard stories from Gamblers Anonymous people and things like--- Fortunately a member of my family came with me to make sure I went. That day I said sixteen times I wasn't going to the meeting. But a member of the family made sure I went, because I wanted to go, but somehow I didn't think I had the guts to go. When I went into the room they said, "Money to a gambler is like drugs to a drug addict. Don't ever let him have money." And, they told me things would get better as long as I do the right thing. They said that gambling was a disease; that I have to come to meetings for the rest of my life. Although, I can't think about the rest of my life. I have to do it one day at a time, and things will get better.

I follow the GA program. I was working with a company that had payoffs and other things, and when I came into GA I started realizing that I was sick and realizing finally that I was able to open up for the first time in my life to tell my family the truth of what I had done. They put me on a plan, and I follow the plan. I went back with the old company that I had been with for many years and I did well, but of course I never got really far ahead, because of total desperation. My wife now gets my paycheck. I don't even see the money. I have no bank account. She gives me an allowance for gas every day, and I have learned not to lie, and I have not had a drink in four months even. I don't want to drink. I don't want to do anything to change my mind. I am living a normal life. My daughter was born four weeks ago, and I come home now and I am honest. All the people I had debts with, the shylocks and the banks, they are all working with me through the GA to put me on a plan. They told me I don't have a financial problem. I have an emotional problem, so all my financial problems of course will take me, I would say, maybe five years to pay it all back, but at least for the first time I have listed every debt that I have in the world, and it is listed, and through the GA I am on a five-year plan where I can pay all the debts back through my wife handling the money, for the first time. That gives me relief. I don't even want to see it. If I even see money it scares me. I don't even like to look at it.

So, all I know now is I am doing a normal thing. I feel I am a normal person. I want to be a square. People call me a square now, and to me that would be a compliment, that I am a square person, that I don't drink, that I don't gamble, that I am a family man. I just want to be a father and I am looking to do the right things through the GA program. I never miss a meeting. I go to two meetings a week, and in the GA room I found that there are other areas that I want to find out about my life. I am even going to outside help now, to a psychologist, which is because I want to keep bettering myself. I never want to go back to where I was. I am just looking to continue and I am going to keep going to GA meetings and keep telling the truth, and I thank you for listening.

ASSEMBLYMAN SNEDEKER: Thank you, Mr. B. I have just a couple questions to ask of you. You have only been in the program for nine months---

MR. B.: Seven months.

ASSEMBLYMAN SNEDEKER: Do you feel that because other people have the same problem that you have, that you are not the only person in the world that had the one problem, or did you think at the time that you were the only guy that had that problem?

MR. B.: Before I came into GA I thought I was the only one in the world that had this problem.

ASSEMBLYMAN SNEDEKER: And you didn't think it was a problem.

MR. B.: I never thought I had a problem. To me, my only out was to be killed, or to kill myself, because to me there was never any way that I could overcome the problem I had. To me it was insurmountable. But, when I came into the GA room and went to that first meeting, and I realized that there were other people who had this problem, and I saw some of them who for five and ten years later were successful and living beautiful lives, and by following the GA program it gave me hope, and I wanted it enough to say I am going to follow the program.

ASSEMBLYMAN SNEDEKER: Would you consider that you were an alcoholic along with gambling? Did you consider drinking as a problem?

MR. B.: I gambled way before I ever started drinking, but through the GA program, I also found out that I had a drinking problem, and I have gone to alcoholics anonymous meetings also, and as I said, I have not had a drink in four months, because through the GA program I found out that if I continued to drink, although I had stopped gambling, it would eventually lead me back to the gambling again. So, I had both problems, and I am working on both problems currently.

ASSEMBLYMAN SNEDEKER: Do you think you can work with other people in the gamblers program to help them and know what their problem is, now that you have been in it for a short period of time?

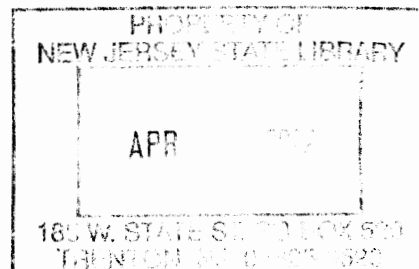
MR. B.: Definitely. I was in a meeting last night and a young kid came into the room, and he was in jail for ten years. He just got out of jail for ten years, and he walked into the room and he heard the stories, and he said, "My God, I wish I would have come in here ten years ago." The guy was crying, and he said the reason he was in jail was because of his gambling. He said he hoped seven months from now he could straighten his life out to where you are. He said he had some hope. So, it made me feel good that a guy was looking up to me like that.

ASSEMBLYMAN SNEDEKER: Are there any other questions? If not, I want to thank you very much. I think your statement and your willingness to come here today is going to be the highlight, probably of what we accomplish today. If we accomplish nothing else, you have contributed an awful lot to this meeting, and I appreciate it very much. We thank you.

MR. B.: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN SNEDEKER: We will take a lunch break now, and we will come back at two o'clock to start. Thank you.

(Luncheon recess)



AFTERNOON SESSION:

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: Can we please come to order so we can resume with the testimony?

Mr. Bob Klein, please. Will you identify yourself and the organizations that you represent?

B O B K L E I N: My name is Bob Klein. I am with the National Council on Compulsive Gambling. I am also a specialist counselor at the Atlantic City High School.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: Do you have prepared testimony?

MR. KLEIN: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: Did we get copies?

MR. KLEIN: Yes. I wish to thank the members of the Assembly Institutions, Health and Welfare Committee for granting me permission to testify. I work in the City of Atlantic City, and wish now to tell the Committee of my observations and insights relative to both compulsive gamblers and to the teenagers who are subjected to the immense enticement of the availability of gambling in the community.

My name is Robert M. Klein. I am presently working in the Atlantic City High School as an intervention counselor, a specialist in the area of addiction. I have the opportunity to interact with those high school students who approach me for help, or who are referred to me from the Youth Study Team, Guidance Counselors, or faculty.

After the students have completed a confidential interview, 80% have been revealed to have problems related to alcohol, drugs and/or compulsive gambling, or come from a home environment where they are subjected to some kind of alcohol, drug, and/or gambling abuse.

When I mentioned compulsive gambling, I refer to the definition of pathological gambling as classified in the American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual III - Section 312.31.

"Chronic and progressive preoccupation with gambling and the urge to gamble . . . The gambling compromises, disrupts, or damages family, personal, and rational pursuits . . ."

Obviously, compulsive gambling poses a serious threat to the health of the family. Compulsive gambling is an illness that is not bound by cultural, religious, racial, sexual, or economic barriers. It affects all segments of our society. It is an illness that is not limited in its effects to the individual but rather which causes suffering to the entire family, the employer, the neighbor, and friend, the business and financial community, to the community at large. Professionals are not trained to treat compulsive gamblers. No treatment centers for compulsive gamblers existed until Maryland's compulsive gambling counseling center opened a year ago. Small units within the VA hospitals in Cleveland, Brooklyn and Miami serve only certain compulsive gamblers; they do not treat non-veterans, female gamblers or the family. The VA centers do not have the funds to provide support and there are no financial resources. The disparity between available resources and the magnitude of the problem is enormous.

Last year I conducted a survey of gambling in the Atlantic City High School and the results that were obtained I would like to discuss at the end of my testimony.

In counseling students, I obtained the following data:

- 1) Students from Atlantic City and other communities are gambling at casinos from the age of 14.
- 2) Parents and underage students gamble together in the casinos.
- 3) Students are missing school and/or cutting class so they can gamble.
- 4) Students admitting to be compulsive gamblers have attended Gamblers Anonymous meetings in Atlantic City. Gam-a-teen is now in place in Atlantic City for those students who come from a home environment of compulsive gambling.

Presently, there is an eighteen year old male, having been referred to me by Atlantic City Alcohol Detox, who is unable to be here today, because he is in an Alcohol Treatment Facility. He is also an admitted compulsive gambler, having stolen in part from his relatives and immediate family over \$100,000 in jewelry and cash in order to feed his gambling habit. Although this individual is being treated for his alcoholism in a state funded rehab., he would also like to enter a treatment center for his compulsive gambling. There is no treatment facility in the State of New Jersey that he can go to.

Gamblers Anonymous is giving him support, as he has attended meetings. He feels, as I do, that additional counseling in the area of his gambling addiction, and the learning of communication and coping skills will only add in a very positive way to the resources of skills that he will learn from Gamblers Anonymous.

Until my intervention in the high school two months ago, students could apply through the school employment program for a job in the hotel-casino industry, without any educational-awareness concerning alcohol, drug and gambling abuse. I have begun a program to offer these potential candidates for hotel-casino employment a real sense of responsibility toward themselves and others, as well as an awareness of pitfalls inherent in the "All that glitters" atmosphere.

An on-going program in this area is needed plus having a specialist available every day of every school week to counsel, interact with these students and their families, when appropriate, as I now do.

Research has concluded that most compulsive gambling starts at the high school level. My survey has found that students are gambling, and students are being identified as potential and active, compulsive gamblers. There is an enormous opportunity here, I believe, to be productive in the area of prevention in this high school, in the community.

Meeting this challenge can only be realized, I feel, by having awareness education on-going, treatment in an accredited facility, and a continuing research process. We know that compulsive gambling strikes at all people, at all ages, at all races, at all sexes. Compulsive gambling is an illness requiring treatment and rehabilitation of the afflicted person and the family, through the assistance of a broad range of judicial and law enforcement agencies, employers, bankers, educators, insurance companies, mental health professionals, and many others.

Please create a total program of education, research, counseling. They are needed if this effort is to provide equitable opportunity, full mental health and happiness, and undamaged productiveness for all of New Jersey's citizens is going to be successful.

I can only add that persons very lives are at stake. It merits the attention and concern of this committee today. I thank you for permitting me to speak before you.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: Thank you very, very much. Do you want to go back to develop that one other point?

MR. KLEIN: Yes. Again, this is a gambling survey of 65 students in Atlantic City High School.

- 1) 72% of the respondents gambled in the casinos; and gambled more than their friends; 69% gambled once in a while, discussed gambling with no one, and started gambling at the age of 16; 59% gambled with some friends; 25% gambled often, or dicussed gambling with their friends; 16% had friends that gambled, and they started to gamble between the ages of 13 and 15; 12% ommitted lunch in order to save their money to gamble; 12% said they were less happy seemingly than others seemed to be; 9% started gambling before the age of 10; 7% believed that gambling would be a problem in the future; 6% indicated they started gambling between 10 and 12 years of age; 6% indicated that their parents worry about gambling; 6% indicate they shoplift to get gambling money; 5% indicated that gambling interferes with their life, and 3% indicated they sold drugs to get money to gamble.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: Thank you. Is there anything else you wish to add to that?

MR. KLEIN: No, sir.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: Assemblyman Snedeker.

ASSEMBLYMAN SNEDEKER: You have given some ages now. When you say the precentages, would you say the larger percentage are of the legal age to go into the casino who are compulsive gamblers in Atlantic City, or under the legal age?

MR. KLEIN: The most compulsive gamblers?

ASSEMBLYMAN SNEDEKER: Well, the ones that you are percentaging now on here, and most of the ones that you see in Atlantic City, the compulsive ones, yes.

MR. KLEIN: These youngsters are not identified as compulsive gamblers. They are identified as teenagers who gamble at the casino.

ASSEMBLYMAN SNEDEKER: Would you say the majority of those would be of legal age and allowed to go to the casino?

MR. KLEIN: No, I would not. They are not of age.

ASSEMBLYMAN SNEDEKER: In other words, that then can be prevented by some sort of tougher identification to enter the casino if that were the case, if there are illegal people in there that are not of the age of eighteen.

MR. KLEIN: Yes, sir.

ASSEMBLYMAN SNEDEKER: The program you indicated here, the one teen program that is going to start down there, is anyone from the casino industry or any casino industry supporting that program with funding of any kind?

MR. KLEIN: Are you talking about the Gam-a-teen program?

ASSEMBLYMAN SNEDEKER: Yes.

MR. KLEIN: That program is similar to the Gamblers Anonymous program where they cannot accept outside contributions. They are self-supporting through their own contributions, when necessary. Specifically, in this case, they would not need money for rent, but perhaps to buy literature.

ASSEMBLYMAN SNEDEKER: Since you are in the Atlantic City area, have you made any approach to any of the casinos there for funding of any kind, an outreach program, or anything like that?

MR. KLEIN: At this point I have not done anything, sir.

ASSEMBLYMAN SNEDEKER: Has there been any indication from the industry there in Atlantic City, since you are so close to them, that they would be receptive to this type of idea?

MR. KLEIN: They indicated to me that they are in favor of a treatment facility. They do not know when this will all happen, but they certainly would go along with having one in the area.

ASSEMBLYMAN SNEDEKER: What do you think the biggest need is, more Gam-a-teen programs or is it more for the teenager who would be addicted to the gambling, more or less, and would steal and commit a crime for it. Do you think there is more need for the Gam-a-teen type program, or different type programs?

MR. KLEIN: What I do is speak to the health classes on the educational awareness level about abuse, be it drugs, alcohol and gambling to give them information as to what responsibility is to themselves and to others, and to make a choice, if they are going to get involved in any of these areas.

ASSEMBLYMAN SNEDEKER: Okay, is the school now funding a program in education on gambling in the Atlantic City area?

MR. KLEIN: I am employed by the Health Department of Atlantic City.

ASSEMBLYMAN SNEDEKER: The schools are not involved in any type of program? You do this as part of your job in the Health Department, or as a freebie, or what?

MR. KLEIN: I am employed by the Health Department to work in the Atlantic City High School on a full-time basis.

ASSEMBLYMAN SNEDEKER: For gambling and drug and other programs?

MR. KLEIN: Addictions, yes, sir.

ASSEMBLYMAN SNEDEKER: That is all I have, Mr. Chairman.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: Assemblyman Markert.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: Mr. Klein, prior to the casinos coming into play, was any thought given to the problem of gambling?

MR. KLEIN: From what I understand, gambling has always been going on, before the casinos came into play. The availability has accelerated the problems, has gotten the teenager more involved with gambling.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: Atlantic City Raceway, and the rest of them were being utilized by the gambler or by the teenager at that point in time.

MR. KLEIN: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: You have no breakdown, though, on how much it has increased or just what percentage of the gambler has switched from one form of gambling to another?

MR. KLEIN: The teenagers that I have come in contact with have indicated that the gambling they do is at the casino.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: Yes, but that is now.

MR. KLEIN: Yes, sir.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: Were they gambling before the casinos? Did you ask that kind of a question?

MR. KLEIN: No.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: So you don't really know whether or not we have the same number of gamblers now as we did before. It is just they are gambling in a different area, possibly because of the availability of the casino there.

It may have been the numbers; it may have been the horse; it may have been the backyard blackjack, and it may have been the dice against the wall, but we don't know.

MR. KLEIN: We don't know.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: I see. Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: Assemblyman Bassano.

ASSEMBLYMAN BASSANO: Mr. Klein, on the chart that you showed us earlier, I believe you stated that 77% of the youngsters had gambled at one time or another; is that correct?

MR. KLEIN: 72% had gambled in the casino.

ASSEMBLYMAN BASSANO: I thought the chart said 77%. Okay. Of the 72% that have gambled, do you have a breakdown as to how much money was involved in your type of gambling? Can you give us an idea as to what we are talking about in dollars with regard to youngsters?

MR. KLEIN: I can't do that from this.

ASSEMBLYMAN BASSANO: Of that 72%, how many, in your opinion from what you know about gambling, would fit into the classification as being compulsive gamblers.

MR. KLEIN: Well, that is hard to say, because this was a survey that was taken at assembly, so realistically I don't know if I have seen any of those students who took the survey.

ASSEMBLYMAN BASSANO: So in fact we are not really sure how many of those people would be compulsive gamblers?

MR. KLEIN: Well, according to the chart, I would have to say that there is qualification there to be problem gamblers.

ASSEMBLYMAN BASSANO: It would be more than those people that stated that they felt that at some later time in life gambling would become a problem.

MR. KLEIN: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN BASSANO: It would have to be over that 7%, then.

MR. KLEIN: That is possible.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: Mr. Klein, do you know, from your own knowledge, the age that a person must be to enter a casino in Atlantic City? Must you be eighteen by law?

MR. KLEIN: Yes, sir.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: You must be eighteen.

MR. KLEIN: Yes, sir.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: Are you saying for the record that there are young people who are entering the casinos who are under eighteen? Are you saying that?

MR. KLEIN: What I am saying is that students have told me that they have gone to the casino and gambled from the age of fourteen and up.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: Are they required to show identification which would indicate their age?

MR. KLEIN: There is security and at times there are security checks. But, evidently, not all the time, sir.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: When there are no security checks, from your knowledge and from your observations, are you saying that the security should be tightened up?

MR. KLEIN: I would have to make that assumption, sir. I feel that what also can happen is that the better communication between the casinos, security

and the high school, that this particular program that I mentioned earlier beyond going as far as informing the students that when they do become of age to gamble that they have a certain responsibility.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: But from your knowledge again, is there an absenteeism in the Atlantic City Schools because of the casinos, or wouldn't you know?

MR. KLEIN: From what the students tell me, they miss school and they cut class to gamble.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: The students that you interviewed and that you talked to, they tell you that they cut class to gamble.

MR. KLEIN: Yes, sir.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: Are there any records in Atlantic City which would indicate the kind of absenteeism that exists now that the casinos are there, and when there were no casinos, is there any comparison?

MR. KLEIN: There are records.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: But you have not made a study or analyzed those records?

MR. KLEIN: No, sir, I have not.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: From your observations and from the positions that you now occupy, what do you think ought to be done to keep the kids out of the casinos? What could you suggest to give them better protection from the entrance into those casinos? What would you recommend?

MR. KLEIN: My top priority would be education.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: I understand that the worst gambler is an educated gambler.

MR. KLEIN: I can't disagree with you. What I mean is, for example, to offer every freshman class, or maybe ongoing as a student goes up the ladder in school, some information about compulsive gambling, what it can do, how to recognize the symptoms and what the individual can do when he or she finds out that they may be crossing over that line.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: What I want to ask you, again, from your position, should there be better security? Should there be better identification to prevent what you are talking about with school kids?

MR. KLEIN: That is one way, yes. But I would have to say from my own point of view that there be education, because as of now there is none, other than what I am offering in the high school.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: Thank you, Mr. Klein, very much. You have been very helpful.

Can we have Mr. H. now? You are a member of gamblers anonymous; is that a fact?

M R. H.: Yes, I am.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: And, for the purpose of this hearing, we are going to refer to you as Mr. H.; is that all right with you?

MR. H.: That is fine.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: All right, do you want to go on from there, please?

MR. H.: Surely. You have heard a lot of testimony this morning from experts who are not gamblers. I consider myself an expert who is a gambler. I am a compulsive gambler; I have been a member of Gamblers Anonymous for almost twelve years. I have not made a bet in the time I have been in Gamblers Anonymous.

I started my gambling career when I was about thirteen years old. I come from a middle class family. Both my parents worked. They worked very hard to give us every advantage that we could possibly have. From the time I was thirteen years old, I started hanging around bowling alleys, and I started bowling for small amounts in the beginning and then when the bowling alleys were filled, or it was raining, we would bet on raindrops falling down window panes. If the sun was shining, we would go through the cemetery behind the bowling alley and we would play acey-deucey on top of tombstones. We would gamble behind the temples and the churches, any place that we could find a place to gamble, we would gamble, on anything and everything, including racing, insects, and raindrops and snowfalls, and license plates. You name it and we did it.

Now, I was an average kid who came from a middle class family. Why did I gamble? I don't know at this point why I gambled. All I know is that the destruction that I caused while I was growing up will have to remain with me for the rest of my life, because by the time I was sixteen years old, I was bowling and being backed by people, and I got paid to bowl whether I won or lost. If I won, I could win a lot of money and if I lost--- I got paid \$50 to bowl whether I won or lost, and if I won, I got paid 35% of whatever I won.

I also used to climb out my bedroom window at twelve o'clock at night on a Friday night because my parents did not know that I was gambling. I would go to the bowling alley, and bowl in pot games until ten o'clock in the morning, go back home, climb back through my bedroom window and get in bed, and when my parents came in to wake me up, it was like I was never gone. I did a lot of that type of gambling, and I won a lot of money bowling. I won and awful lot of money bowling. But, as a compulsive gambler, that was not enough. It wasn't enough action.

By the time I was sixteen years old, I hit my first shylock, and I was into shylocks from sixteen until twenty-five when I came into Gamblers Anonymous. At seventeen years old when I graduated high school, I caused my father to sell his business to pay off over \$80,000 in gambling debts that my brother and I had incurred. My father had to sell his business. Because of that, my father was never able to retire, and when he died at age 74, he still had to work just to be able to live. I went to college, and my father worked two jobs to send my brother and I to college and my sister all at the same time. And, all I did in college was spend my entire college career in the gameroom playing cards. That is all I did. I flunked out of school and I went into the service.

I went into the service to improve my life, to get my education. I was going to get a new start. Within 11 months I was court-martialled twice for breaking into lockers and stealing money with which to gamble. I was thrown out of the Air Force with a general discharge. I got very lucky. I got a general discharge, but I was court-martialled twice for stealing money to gamble. When I got out of the service, I moved back to my parents house, and I used to crawl into my parents bedroom, while my parents were asleep, and put my hand in my father's pockets and take whatever money I could find. I took a gold coin collection that he had, and I sold it. I stole his cameras; I stole my mother's jewelry; I stole my mother's silverware, and I sold it. I stole from relatives. I borrowed. I cashed back checks. I used to go to every sinel A & S Department Store, and bought an osterizer, and I would return them to every other store I could possibly find. I bought 26 osterizers, at \$46 each, and all on my A & S charge card.

And, I returned it for cash, just to get the money to gamble. I went to Gert's Department Store in Jamaica and four weeks in a row I used to cash a \$50 check. Finally, I got caught. The times I got caught were unbelievable but I always managed to get a bail-out. Now, a bail-out was when I would go to my parents and say, "Mom, I need \$1000 or the shylock is going to kill me. Don't tell Dad." And then I would go to my father and say, "Dad, I need \$1000 because the shylocks are going to kill me; don't tell Mom." I needed \$1000 but I wound up with \$2000, because my parents would hock their souls to protect their children, and I played on that, and I took advantage of it.

I met a girl who was going to Bridgeport University and she graduated college when she was eighteen years old. She was teaching when she was eighteen; she had her Master's when she was twenty; we got married when she was twenty, and by the time she was twenty-one she was a total neurotic. We were married fifteen months, and I turned my wife into a piece of garbage, because I lied to her constantly and there was never any money. If a check had to be made out, I was the doctor, the lawyer, the butcher, and I was the candlestick maker. I was anybody you could possibly imagine. I was the rent. We were married fifteen months, and we were evicted from our apartment.

I stole from my wife's parents; I stole from my wife's grandmother, and I just did everything to destroy my wife. A week after we got married, we got home from our honeymoon, and I took every single check that we got from the honeymoon and paid off shylocks. I stole a diamond watch that my parents had given my wife, and I hocked it. I convinced her she lost it at a friend's wedding. These are all the things that I did before I came to Gamblers Anonymous. Anything that I could get my hands on to raise any kind of money I would do.

When I came into GA, I was making \$95 a week, and I was paying shylocks \$350 a week. I had 17 judgements against me. I owed three finance companies. I owed 32 people money, and I used to call myself a minus zero, because I owed 32 people money. It took me a long time to pay everyone of these people back, but through the GA program, every single person that I owed money to was paid back. It was slow; it was painful; but, I had to do it, and that was the GA way. Through this program I have developed from a degenerate to a normal human being with one exception. I cannot gamble.

Now, I go to GA meetings on a regular basis. If a doctor told me that I had cancer, and if I went for cobalt treatment once a week for three hours, I would be fine, I would go. Compulsive gambling is a cancer, and it is a cancer that starts in childhood. It happened to me, and it happened to my twin brother. The only difference between myself and my twin brother is that my brother is still a compulsive gambler who is in action. I am a compulsive gambler whose disease is arrested. My disease will never be cured. It will never be cured. It can only be arrested. And, it can only be arrested if I can continue to go to a GA program or a program similar to it. We need help in this State very, very badly.

There were a bunch of children sitting up in the balcony before. I wonder how many of those children are going to become compulsive gamblers. I wonder how many of those children's parents are compulsive gamblers? Atlantic City is not helping that situation. I see kids in my neighborhood who run to Atlantic City with their parents and without their parents. They are sixteen years old, and they have licenses. They get in the car, and they brag about going to Atlantic City to casinos to gamble. But, that is me; that was me twenty years ago. That is exactly what I did, and that is exactly where I wound

up. I wound up a degenerate gambler who would do anything to get money. That is what Atlantic City is causing.

You asked questions of the gentleman who spoke before me, if he had facts about the increase of compulsive gambling in high schools. Believe me, it is there. Casinos only help that. It grows from that, just like racetracks do it, the lottery, any kind of gambling. Gambling is a fact of life in this country and it is not going to change. It is going to get worse. There is going to be legalized gambling in New York. There are going to be more casinos in Atlantic City. There is going to be gambling all over this country. It is a fact of life, and there is nothing we can do about that. What we can do is start programs and start health programs and clinics to work with the people who are affected by this disease, because my compulsive gambling caused heartache with my wife, with my parents, with my in-laws, with my grandparents, and with my sister. So, I personally affected 7 or 8 people with my compulsive gambling.

I caused my father to lose his business because of my compulsive gambling. My mother lives on social security today and the little bit of money my father left her when he passed away was so little because of my compulsive gambling. I don't want to see that happen to those kids who were up in the stands, because that would be a tragedy, especially when we have the ability to do something about it. If we have the ability in this State to push for casino gambling, then we should have the ability in this state to push for clinics and programs to help the compulsive gambler, which we are helping to create.

I am a compulsive gambler. I will be a compulsive gambler for the rest of my life. But, I will never make another bet as long as I live, as long as I continue to be active in a program like Gamblers Anonymous. That is my testimony.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: Thank you very much. Mr. Snedeker.

ASSEMBLYMAN SNEDEKER: How long have you been in Gamblers Anonymous?

MR. H.: It will be twelve years Memorial Day.

ASSEMBLYMAN SNEDEKER: Do you find it to be a problem talking to others about your problem?

MR. H.: No. There is nobody that I know that does not know that I am a compulsive gambler. I have spoken at high schools; I have spoken in colleges. I have not recently - but I have - and I know other people from Gamblers Anonymous are always available to speak at high schools and other learning institutions to talk to children and talk to kids in college about the problems of compulsive gambling. As a matter of fact, I was at one--- I forget the college I spoke at, but there was one college where they were giving a course in gambling, how to beat the odds, and then they bring in a guy like me, and the kids in the audience laughed. They thought it was a joke that we were compulsive gamblers. One of them was planning to go to the casinos in Las Vegas because he had a system from this course that he was taught in college. He had a system that he was going to win. When we went back to speak at the school, we found out that the kid got wiped out.

ASSEMBLYMAN SNEDEKER: How many have been in the Gamblers Anonymous groups that you have been in so far?

MR. H.: How many---

ASSEMBLYMAN SNEDEKER: How many people, individuals?

MR. H.: I don't understand the question.

ASSEMBLYMAN SNEDEKER: Well, do they go into a group and then go out and have a group and start another group from there; is that the object?

MR. H.: Oh, absolutely. I started at Gamblers Anonymous twelve years ago in New York. I lived in New York at that time. I have been a resident of New Jersey for the past nine years, and when I came down here, they started the Sayreville group and they have two groups in Sayreville now, and a group in Mercerville started from that. There are twenty-seven meetings in New Jersey. Those twenty-seven meetings have grown from the one meeting.

ASSEMBLYMAN SNEDEKER: And, they are about twice a week?

MR. H.: There is a meeting every night of the week in New Jersey somewhere.

ASSEMBLYMAN SNEDEKER: You can go somewhere--- Generally they have them about twice a week in the area?

MR. H.: It varies. There is a meeting somewhere in New Jersey every night of the week. In Sayreville there is a meeting on Wednesday night, and in Parlin there is meeting on Thursday night. Or, it may be just the opposite.

ASSEMBLYMAN SNEDEKER: Why do you think Gamblers Anonymous helps you? Would it be because you have found others who have the same problem?

MR. H.: I was able to relate to people with a problem similar to mine, which I was never able to do before. I had gone to psychiatrists when I was younger, but I never had the opportunity to relate to somebody who had the same problem as I had. You know, it is amazing how you develop when you go to these programs. I am a meaningful member of society now. That is something that I never thought I would be. I have the ability to give now, which I never did. I only had the ability to take when I was gambling.

Now, I live in Marlboro and I was on the Drug and Alcohol Commission in the Township. I was on the Board of Directors for the Monmouth County Retarded Citizens Association. These are all things that I am able to do now because I am not gambling. If I was gambling, I wouldn't give a damn about anything. I would not have two children. Because both of my children are what I call GA babies. They were born after I came into the program. So, I am very, very fortunate. But, I have seen devastation of children that come from families of compulsive gamblers, and that is horrifying, absolutely horrifying.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: Mr. Markert.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: Yes, thank you. Mr. H., let me ask, how do we reach someone like you? What was your determining factor that created that need for you and the understanding for you and the desire by you to be able to join GA? How did it happen? How did it come about?

MR. H.: I heard about Gamblers Anonymous through a radio commercial, and I didn't call them when I first heard about it, but when I hit my bottom, I remembered that there was a group called Gamblers Anonymous. I got on the phone and called someone, and someone called me back, and the next night I was at a meeting.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: So you yourself took the initiative to be able to get involved---

MR. H.: In my case, yes. But, I know many people who have come to GA because their spouses got involved, or someone whom they knew told them about Gamblers Anonymous.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: In your eyes, and with the experience that you have had, can you tell us by what methods you think we could reach people such as yourselves before they get to this position of rock bottom or the pits?

MR. H.: Yes, I think I can. I think at least I have an idea. We,

the people of New Jersey, voted to legalize gambling in the State of New Jersey. And, we have casinos that are making a lot of money in Atlantic City. If we were to take a portion of that money - no matter how insignificant that portion might be, and use that for promotion, to promote the idea that there is a Gamblers Anonymous, that there is a National Council on Compulsive Gambling, to make people aware that this is a problem, not something that is still in the closet--- You know, there are six million compulsive gamblers in this country, and there are six thousand members of Gamblers Anonymous.

Now, if there are six million compulsive gamblers in this country, every one of those people affects four, five or six people. You are talking about 15% of the population of the United States being affected by compulsive gambling. We are one of the only states in the country that has casino gambling legalized in our State. We are creating compulsive gamblers. We should also create a promotional campaign to let people know that there are places where they can get help if they have a problem.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: In other words, you think that by possibly TV ads, or newspaper ads, establishing the fact that there is such a thing as GA would be one very important method of being able to reach out to the people who would be looking for that one straw, that one bit of help?

MR. H.: Absolutely. You know, everybody watches TV, and you ride down the New Jersey Turnpike and you see these billboards- Resorts International, Resorts International, Resorts International, Ceasars, Playboy.-from New York all the way down the entire turnpike you see billboards. There are plenty of billboards. Let the State buy a billboard and say, "If you have a gambling problem, call Gamblers Anonymous." Take TV ads. Spend the money on promoting something that is going to help the people who are affected by something that we legislated, legalized gambling.

We have a responsibility to the entire state. I have the responsibility to promote Gamblers Anonymous because I am a compulsive gambler, and I received help. You people as the Legislators of the State who voted to legalize or proposed legalized gambling, you have a responsibility to the people of the State, too, to help the ones who are affected by compulsive gambling.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: Thank you. One more question, if I might. Earlier in testimony today we heard that this could be really a behavior type of problem, and that maybe psychologically we should address this and possibly address it within our mental health program that is already established in the State that deal with alcoholism and drug abuse. Do you think - and I am only asking for your personal opinion - that this would have been of help to you if this type of situation was available or this type of program was available then, or you knew about it?

MR. H.: Possibly, I don't know. When I was a kid, my parents sent me to a psychiatrist. I lied to the psychiatrist. I mean, they spent whatever it was to treat me---

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: Did the psychiatrist know you were lying?

MR. H.: No, I went to the psychiatrist for a year and a half, and I lied to him for a year and a half. You have to understand something. As a compulsive gambler, we are also compulsive thieves, and we are also compulsive liars, and we are very good at it. We are very smart people. We have to be smart, and we have to be conniving, and we have to be devious to get away with what we get away with for as long as we do. If we weren't we wouldn't get ourselves into the position that we are in. I am a very smart individual. At

least I consider myself to be that. But, my smartness destroyed my life because I used all of my energies for the wrong things. So, I don't know if that type of program would have helped me. It is a start. Every little thing that we do is a start to help fight an illness that is a cancer.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: Basically, if I understand what you are saying, it is that we are not going to be able to help in the beginning because of the fact that the individual is not looking for the help.

MR. H.: You cannot help a compulsive gambler unless he admits he is a compulsive gambler.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: The same as an alcoholic.

MR. H.: The first step is my step. I have to admit that I am a compulsive gambler, that I have a problem. Once I admit that, then I can be helped.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: It is at that level that you feel we, the State of New Jersey, should be able to get involved, whether it is through education or whether it be the knowledge of where to go or whatever.

MR. H.: No, you should be involved before that level. You should be involved in promotion that there is a problem, and if you have that problem, call. Let the people know that there is something out there that can help them. If I saw an ad on TV, maybe fifteen years ago instead of twelve years ago that said, "Hey, if you have a gambling problem, call gamblers anonymous," maybe I would have made that call and saved three years of misery.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: So, possibly the hot line that would be able to be utilized right across the State of New Jersey to be able to pass out information as to where and how you could get some help would be an advisable situation.

MR. H.: A hot line would be phenomenal, if it was publicized.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: I have no further questions. Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: Assemblyman Bassano.

ASSEMBLYMAN BASSANO: Mr. H., one fast question. You have been with GA now for twelve years, and I presume that during that twelve-year period, you have seen people come through the doors of the various meetings throughout the State. What is the success ratio of the individual that comes through the door of GA?

MR. H.: There are two different views on success ratio. My view of a success ratio is 100%, because the person who wants to stop gambling will stop gambling. However, the person who comes into a Gamblers Anonymous room and stays clean for, let's say, a year and then goes back - he stayed clean for that year, and he also knows at that point that there is a room or meeting place that he can come back to, that he can talk to, that there are people like him. Not everybody stops gambling and never gambles again. There are a lot of people who go back to gambling. But, of the ones that go back, a lot also come back into the room, because they know they can get the help they want. And, they know that they are not going to get a financial bail-out. We don't give people money to pay off their debts. What the GA program does is teach us to live a normal life.

We pay off our debts ourselves. We become meaningful members of society. We raise our families. We hope that our kids don't make the same mistakes that we made. But, there is a place that we can come back to, even if we go back to gambling. There is nothing to say that I won't go back to gambling tomorrow. But, if I go back to gambling tomorrow, I know that I can go into

a GA room the day after and still get that same help and nobody is going to look down on me, and nobody is going to berate me because I went back to gambling. It is a matter of having a place where you can talk to somebody to air your feelings, not to find out so much why you gamble, but to arrest the sickness.

ASSEMBLYMAN BASSANO: One other question, people who are compulsive gamblers, have you found them to be compulsive in any other way?

MR. H.: I am compulsive in everything in my life. I am a compulsive worker; I am just a compulsive personality. But, that is me as an individual. Most compulsive gamblers are compulsive people. Everybody brings out their compulsions in various ways. I mean, you may be a softball nut. You may go play softball seven times a week. I mean, I started playing racquetball and I play racquetball three times a week now. I mean, my doctor says I am crazy. But, I am compulsive at it. But, that is me as an individual. Yes, compulsive gambling is just one form of compulsiveness that is the personality of the individual.

ASSEMBLYMAN BASSANO: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: Our Committee Aide has a question.

MR. KOHLER: Sir, when you were making \$95 a week and paying out \$315 a week for shylocks, there is a difference there of \$255. How did you come up with that?

MR. H.: Well, it was not just a matter of \$255. It was a matter of more like \$1200, because shylocks were only one part of my gambling debts. I owed banks and finance companies and individuals and bookmakers. I stole. I constantly stole anything I could steal. It is very simple to steal. It is not so easy to pay back.

MR. KOHLER: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: Thank you very, very much. Is there a Mr. Glenn Reeling here? (No response)

Mrs. W.? We are going to refer to you as Mrs. W.; is that all right with you?

M R S. W.: That is fine.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: And, you are a member of Gamblers Anonymous?

MRS. W.: I am a member of Gam-Anon, which is a fellowship of families and friends of the compulsive gambler.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: So, Someone in your family is afflicted; is that what you are saying?

MRS. W.: That is right.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: Do you want to tell us about that?

MRS. W.: Sure. I am hoping in some small way that I can help you to understand what families go through. As has been mentioned here several times today, the compulsive gambler affects many people around him. And, if that person is married, the person closest, the wife, the husband is the one that seems to be most affected, and then come the children.

I am married to a compulsive gambler who at this point in time has arrested his illness. But, what I would like to talk about today is what it was like when he was actively gambling. When you marry a compulsive gambler, you usually don't know it. I didn't know it. I knew he liked to gamble. I knew that gambling was a pastime to him, and I really didn't see any harm in that. I also realize now that his attitude towards money was very casual and I think I was attracted to that. We had some of our early dates at the racetrack, and I had fun. I thought it was an exciting way to spend a Saturday evening.

Compulsive gambling is a progressive illness, and some of the tell-tale signs that start popping up - financial pressures, someone who seems preoccupied with watching a sporting event. They happen slowly and gradually and you don't always realize that they are happening in your life until you look back at them. But, that is what happened in my life.

At first, there was a loan that had to be paid, and I received a promise that he would never gamble again, that he realized he had gotten in over his head, and this was the lesson he needed. So, if I were to work with him, and help him pay back this loan, we would start clean, and I did help him, and I hoped that we were going to start clean. It seemed to me that every time we got close to paying off that next loan another loan appeared, and another and another, and there was a series of financial setbacks over a period of years that deteriorated us financially. There were bills that went unpaid, children that didn't have shoes, furniture that ripped and could not be replaced. There were some months not knowing whether the rent would get paid or not. That was a gradual deterioration. It didn't start like that, but that is how it ended.

I stopped working after my first child was born, and wanted to devote myself to being a mother. I felt that I had looked forward to that since I was a young child. I grew up like most little girls in my era did, thinking that you live happily ever after, and you have a couple of kids and a home and little white picket fence and that was really all I ever wanted.

What started to happen in my marriage was that I was losing my husband and I couldn't really understand why. Aside from the financial setbacks, there seemed to be a distance between us. There were fights for no reason, it seemed to me. I later realized that the arguments were so that he could leave the house. They were excuses for him. They didn't really have a basis. It was just so he could make a phone call, go to the track, or do whatever he was doing in his gambling. My husband happened to gamble on anything that was available, anything.

I often wondered what it was that I could do to change the situation, and as the years went on, I began to question my abilities as a wife. I felt very inadequate. I felt that if I was loving enough or caring enough that my husband wouldn't need any outlet such as gambling, and I never realized how much he was gambling. I just knew that he was gambling. I knew that when I woke up at three o'clock in the morning and found him listening to the radio that what he was listening to was the sporting station, finding out the results of some sporting event he had been on. I knew that when I would see him watching television and listening to the radio at the same time, that I was not very important to him at that time. I knew that he shushed the children away and threw them out of the room and told them to keep quiet or shut-up or threw something at them, which was not like him during other times - this was while he was listening to racing results.

I knew that we couldn't go out during certain hours, because he would have to be home to watch whatever he had to watch. I knew I would find newspapers all over the house, and I was not allowed to touch them, because he had to plan his next day's gambling. Everything got worse - financially, physically, emotionally. When I say physically, I suffered physical symptoms. I began to have pains in my chest. I began to see doctors about it. I was put on tranquilizers at one point. I started to isolate myself from the world. I withdrew. I thought that somehow or other I had to find a way to stop this person from gambling, to stop the destruction that was going on in my family and because I held myself

responsible for it, I dare not talk to anybody else about it, and I never did. I stayed within the walls of my apartment. I occasionally looked out the window, but there came a point in my life where I stopped going out. I stayed home. I didn't answer the phone for fear that it was a bill collector. I didn't open the mail for fear that it was an unpaid bill, and I didn't answer the door. I knew what time my children would get home from school and that is when I started to function, as best I could, at that time.

So, when you ask for the effects, and you want to know dollars and cents, I can't give them to you, but I can tell you that there are women who are emotionally distraught, husbands who are emotionally distraught, because someone in their family is gambling. I can tell you that there are children who go neglected, financially neglected, which is bad enough, and it is almost a product of our times, and my children went emotionally neglected. I couldn't be bothered. I couldn't play with them. I couldn't listen to them. I couldn't pay attention to their needs. I was too overwhelmed with the gambling problem in my family. So, they were affected in some unknown way that we can't measure in dollars and cents and we can't measure over a course of years. I don't know when the effects of that are going to come out in my children. One of my children is a drug addict. I don't know if that happened because I neglected her when she was a little girl, but it is very possible that happened because I neglected her because her father was gambling, because she didn't have the needs nurtured that a child needs. I don't know if there are going to be effects on my other children and the thousands of children that I know of in the program as it is today.

At one time, I was a Gam-a-teen sponsor, and I met many, many children who lived with the compulsive gambling problem, and most of them had the same thing in common, and that was they did not know what was going on in their family. They just knew it was being destroyed. They knew that two people who should love each other and care about each other were fighting constantly. They knew that they couldn't dare ask for a pair of new sneakers for the track meet next week, because there was no money for it. Those are the effects of compulsive gambling. People go on welfare, wives go to work to pay the bills, not because they want to get out of the house, but because they have to pay the bills. Some women use alcohol. I used tranquilizers for a long period of time. It was the only way I could cope, and I wasn't doing a very good job even with that.

You don't know what is happening around you. I saw a television program once that hinted at Gamblers Anonymous, and I remember waking my husband up and telling him about it, and him telling me that he was different than they were, because he could stop any time he wanted to, and I wanted to believe that, and I did try to believe that for many, many years. A compulsive gambler is able to convince you that black is white and day is night. I would like to think of myself as a fairly - not brilliant but certainly I could pass as being fairly - intelligent person. And, yet, this man was able to convince me that a car that I knew was parked on one street was parked on another street - and something I knew I had told him he could convince me that I had never said it. If the bank sent a letter to the house saying that we were past due on something, he could convince me that the bank president was making a mistake. That is the nature of the compulsive gambling illness. And, there is usually somebody in his or her life that buys into that, and I was the person who bought into that.

There is a fantasy world built by the compulsive gambler, and the people in his family, and the people who are closest to him buy into the fantasy, "One more hit, and I am never going to gamble again; one more hit and you

are going to get a car; one more hit and we are going to buy a house; just let me win this one time, and we are going to have everything." And, I believed that when he told me those things, that is what he meant. At that time, for that minute, that is what he meant. But, his compulsion to gamble overwhelmed him the next minute and I became less important and the children became less important.

I am one of the fortunate ones. I found Gam-a-non because my husband found GA. In most cases that I know of, in my experience in Gam-a-non, it is the spouse that reaches out for help first. Maybe that is who we need to reach first, the person who is living with the compulsive gambler is usually much more aware of the illness than the compulsive gambler himself. I was not one of those who reached out first. I was so caught up in my own depression and in my own anxiety that I didn't bother to reach out for help. I didn't think there was help. I felt alone; I felt isolated, and I felt desperate, but I didn't know who to go to. As I said, I was one of the fortunate ones, my husband reached out for help first, and I went along with him. There I found out there were other people just like me. Prior to that, I really didn't know that anybody else lived with this problem, and I think that is the thing that we need to pay attention to, getting people to know that other people live with this problem, that there is help, that people can understand it and can help it.

I live my life now to the fullest, and I believe that I had the potential to be who I am today many years ago, but I was so devastated by this problem that I couldn't pay attention to my own potential.

I thank you for listening.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: Thank you very much. Assemblyman Snedeker.

ASSEMBLYMAN SNEDEKER: You said you were a sponsor of Gam-a-teen at one time?

MRS. W.: Gam-a-teen.

ASSEMBLYMAN SNEDEKER: Well, can you explain Gam-a-non to us?

MRS. W.: Gam-a-non is a fellowship of men and women who have someone in their lives close to them who has the problem of compulsive gambling, a non-profit organization that depends on its own contributions.

ASSEMBLYMAN SNEDEKER: From that you went in and sponsored---

MRS. W.: Gam-a-teen is the program for the teenage children of the compulsive gambler who have lived with this problem.

ASSEMBLYMAN SNEDEKER: Are they generally sponsored by Gam-a-non members?

MRS. W.: They are generally sponsored by someone from Gam-a-non, and sometimes in addition to that, a GA member will co-sponsor.

ASSEMBLYMAN SNEDEKER: Do you still sponsor any of these or attend any of these programs?

MRS. W.: Not right at this time.

ASSEMBLYMAN SNEDEKER: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: Assemblyman Markert.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: No questions.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: I hope that in the course of your life that you have become strong enough now to cope with your present problem that you alluded to with your daughter. I think that you now should at least have the strength to know how to deal with that. I am sure that all of us here express our best wishes to you.

MRS. W.: Thank you very much.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: Mr. G., please? Is it all right if we refer to you as Mr. G. from here on in?

M R. G.: Please.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: You are a member of Gamblers Anonymous.

MR. G.: I am.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: All right, do you want to go on.

MR. G.: Yes. To clear up a few things, just so it is not misunderstood, and I don't think it is, Gamblers Anonymous as a group takes no position as to gambling. We don't take a stand either for or against. As individuals we might. As a group we do not. I heard the question mentioned before about how you reach out to obtain the compulsive gambler. We have a hot line, and just to clear the record, 85% of the calls on the hot line are from family members of compulsive gamblers asking what the fellowship is all about, how do we get our husband or wife, or what have you, in to the fellowship. That means that 15% actually come from compulsive gamblers.

I don't have a prepared text. I don't even take notes. What I say may not come out in the context that I want it to come out, but it is going to be how I feel. Driving down, however, I did have thoughts in mind. Obviously, my first thought is how do I really get your attention. I don't mean physically. I mean, understand that perhaps there is a problem there. The only way I really could assess it is by going through my therapy, my story. At the meetings we call this therapy.

I will capsule it in a very short period of time, otherwise we would be here until perhaps Monday or Tuesday. I don't know when I became a compulsive gambler. I know that gambling dominated my life when I was young. It was very important to me. I went through grammar school and high school, and I went into the service. I always managed to get good marks. I had no history of any problems. I was what I would think a mother would want as a child at that point in my life. I didn't steal. I didn't know how to steal. I wouldn't even conceive of it, in contrast to other stories that you might hear.

I went into the service, and I went to college. I graduated with decent marks, good marks. I played cards mostly at that time, and I went to the racetrack, not excessive. I went to law school and I graduated law school, and I became an attorney. I started to develop a tremendous law practice, and I also started to develop a tremendous appetite for gambling, and basically it was casino gambling. I built up in my law practice a real estate practice, probably if not the best, one of the finest real estate practices in the State of New Jersey. I had six secretaries for a one-man law office. I closed between five and six hundred houses a year out of the practice alone. I was making decent money. I was making big money. I could never make from gambling what I could make out of the practice of law, and you hear dreams sometimes, you know, people dream of cadillacs and new houses and yachts. This I could have received if I would have practiced law, if that was what I wanted, but I felt the need, or had the compulsion, to gamble. I would get invitations from Las Vegas, go out on junkets and be treated unbelievably royal. I would get magnificent suites, four-bedroom suites, and in the suites were game room pool tables, private swimming pools for just the suite. It would all be on the house, obviously, and any restaurant that I went to in the City of Las Vegas I would be treated to. Anything I wanted was just about open to me.

I don't know if I was that dumb to realize what they were doing and why they were giving us this, or I just didn't care, but I was losing huge

sums of money, much more than I could possibly earn and I started to borrow. When you start to borrow and you continue gambling, and you start to lose, you have two obligations. You have a debt to pay and you have a gambling debt to pay. I confused my mind, because I never thought I had a gambling problem. I was only gambling because I had debts to pay. I didn't have to go to shylocks and I didn't have to go to finance companies. I was important, in my own mind. I could go to banks and request money and receive it, and I would gamble it.

As I continued to gamble, I found myself not only failing to pay the principal, but I couldn't even pay the interest on the debts. So, I started to borrow from funds that didn't belong to me. And, I say borrowed, because it was inconceivable to me that I could steal anything. I have never done it in my life. My parents brought me up in a decent house. How could I steal? It was only borrowing. It was temporarily borrowing money until I got lucky and until I was able to pay these debts.

And, then, the casinos opened in Atlantic City. Nobody drew me there. As a matter of fact, I made up my mind that I wasn't even going to go there. I could fight it. I didn't have a problem. I could resist it. And, I resisted it for about six months, and I started to go down with the misapprehension that I wanted to see what the casinos were all about, but I knew why I wanted to go, and when I went down there, I knew a lot of people, because most of the people who are from Las Vegas, and just what you call me, Mr. G., it was the same down there.

Again, I don't know if I was fooled, or my ego needed feeding, but I was socked in by the entire picture. And, I thought I was being smart. I would not take a credit line at the casinos, and therefore, how much could I lose. But, then if I had a closing and the closing was cash, I would grab all the money and run down to the casino, and I would cash checks on accounts that were not mine. And, I would run down to the casino and spend weekends, and of course basically the same situation was there. They would invite me to have dinner on them, and they would invite me to stay over for the weekend, and I happen to know the people at certain hotels and they would call me, why don't you come down and enjoy it, and have a nice vacation on us, and I was invited to fights down there, and I would get magnificent invitations in the mail, one with balloons popping out of it inviting me there, and nobody dragged me there. I realize that.

But, my compulsion to gamble was so obsessive that I don't know if I could resist it. And, I didn't realize what I was really doing. I realized it, but I didn't realize that I had a problem. Well, there is just so far that you can go. And, I reached an end. I don't know - and I don't believe there is a bottom to anybody until you are in the grave, but I reached a point where I just couldn't physically and mentally take it. I had lost so much money, and I had owed so much money and I had borrowed so much money and I really thought I had come to an end. I called up an attorney who was a very close friend of mine, and I told my wife for the first time what was happening. She knew I had gambled, but she didn't know the extent of it. She didn't know that we had a second, third, fourth, and fifth mortgage on the house. She didn't know that I had taken jewelry and cashed it in to gamble. She didn't know that I had exhausted the bank accounts, because she believed in me and loved me and cared about me, and didn't want to believe anything else. And, I called my attorney, and he said that my practice was the type that if I wanted to borrow a million dollars from people, I could have gathered enough people together to do it. But, at that point, I started

to realize that there was no way of paying this money back. There was no where I was going. My life was at an end. And, my attorney told me, "Look, you have to stop what you are doing. You have to stop your law practice. You have to just stop because you are either going to drive yourself out of your mind or kill yourself,"and he was right.

At that point, my wife had gone to Florida, and I told her I would drive down. My attorney knew where I was, if he had to call me, and I closed my practice. It was a shock to everybody in the area that it had occurred. I drove down to Florida, but I prayed I wouldn't make it, but I couldn't stay there. I stayed there one day, and I had to at least face people who wanted to know what had occurred, and what was happening, and I drove right back. I didn't know what happened to me, and I didn't know what was happening around me. I found a note on my door, and it was from a member of gamblers anonymous who happened to be a close friend of mine. And he said, why don't you call me and let's talk about what happened. I called him, and at that time my wife had come up and he sat down, and he never told me that I was a compulsive gambler. As a matter of fact, we sat until about four o'clock in the morning with him. He was just unbelievable. He asked me to go to a meeting with him the next day.

I said I would. I would have gone anywhere for any kind of help. So, I went to a meeting. And, as I sat in the meeting, something dawned on me that maybe I did have a problem. I listened to the stories, relating to some stories that I heard. As was said before, maybe finding out that I am not the only one in the world that has a problem --- As a matter of fact, I had one thing they didn't have. I had a family that was still together. My wife still loved me, despite everything that happened. My children still cared about me. And, I went to that meeting the next day and the following day and I think I made four meetings a week. As a matter of fact, I still do. It has been almost a year now, and I haven't gambled on anything - not a lottery ticket, not a chance, not a pinball machine, nothing, not a penny.

And, believe it or not, my life started to get manageable. I hadn't been in the house for several weeks. I was afraid to go to the house. I wasn't afraid of anybody hurting me, or people, but I was afraid to face people. Slowly I went into the house, and slowly I began to receive help and feel there was hope. In a year, to me it has been amazing. Before this, for the last five years, every time the phone rang either in the office or out of the office, I would jump. I would pace the floor at night. I can sleep now because I feel I am doing the right thing. I have been able to get a decent job. I am not making the money I did. I don't know if I ever will. But, at least what I make I retain. I give to my family. And, it is a decent salary. I am able to use the facilities I have in a correct manner. I get a chance to speak --- I have tried to get very active in the fellowship. My job allows me to do it, because I select my own appointments and time. We have been called in by many high schools, because they have problems with seniors in school - parochial schools and public schools. I speak there, and I have spoken before parole boards. I realize that eventually I will be indicted, which is imminent, but I don't feel I am a criminal. I know I will have to pay for a criminal act that I committed, and because of GA I am able to face that. But, that is another part of my life that I now have to face.

I guess I would be remiss in telling you that my whole mind is changed. It is difficult. The program teaches you to accept the things you cannot change, but don't think it doesn't hurt. Every time my children go to

school, somebody will make a smart remark about his father, and every time my wife works, somebody will point at her. It is not fair to them. They didn't do anything. So, I try to do the best I can, and I just hope some day they can look at their father and say, "He tried. He may not have made it but at least he tried." I am trying through the program. Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: Thank you very much.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: I just have a statement, Mr. G. Just as you have poured out your personal life to us here today, and the same with Ms. B., Mr. P. and Mrs. W., and so forth, I just wish there was some way that we could legislate the type of strength that you and the others have shown over the control of their own lives and the strength that you have shown us, or at least me, that you have been able to muster to be able to overcome this problem that you have. I don't know how we will address it eventually. I know nothing that we could do legislatively will give others the strength that you have found. But it certainly does help me to sit here and understand the problems that are there in that very real world out there, and I thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: Thank you very, very much. We appreciate the contribution that you made here.

Dr. B., please. Doctor, you want us to refer to you as Dr. B. and you are a member of Gamblers Anonymous?

D R. B.: That is correct.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: We are going to refer to you as Dr. B. Will you go on from there, please?

DR. B.: I am a member of Gamblers Anonymous. I am a compulsive gambler. My life in gambling also does not include starting at an early age, teenage, or even before that. Upon being a licensed practitioner in the State of New Jersey, I developed a voluminous practice and large financial rewards through hard work. I was always known as a hard worker, and it paid off, as far as financial remunerations. But, the "insidious disease" cropped up. It laid dormant because of my background, middle class background, and striving to be a professional. That included the high marks in high school, high marks in college, acceptance into professional school, graduation from professional school, internship, and thereupon starting out. This consumed most of my daytime activity. And, I didn't leave any room for additional recreation other than the normal recreation.

Upon developing the practice and working hard, this insidious disease awoke in me, and I also was bombarded with leaflets and pamphlets from Las Vegas. This was previous to casino gambling in the State of New Jersey, and I welcomed it as a monument to my success, or so-called success. And, I went with my family, my wife, went alone, and accepted all the remunerations that Las Vegas had to give, and in turn I gave them remunerations, such as my financial well-being. I started to gamble on a small scale, and then on a larger scale, and even so, I would win on occasion. That made very little difference, because it wasn't the money. It was this compulsion to gamble.

Living here in New Jersey, when I couldn't go to Las Vegas I turned to racetracks. Fortunately, racetracks ran at night, because I was known as a hard worker and I never neglected the practice, and I never did, probably because in the later stages I needed the practice to obtain the money to gamble with. And, at night I would make up some excuse to my wife as to where I was going, meetings, associations, and I would gamble at the racetracks, and then the Atlantic City casinos opened up, and I had no need to take time off even

on small vacations to go to casino-type gambling, and so therefore, I would be able to go down to Atlantic City and gamble.

Well, from the previous stories, you can surmise that no one - and I have enough acquaintances through my GA brotherhood - no one ever continually wins. And, this leads to a need for additional money, such as finance companies, and banks. Banks certainly welcome me as a professional, and second mortgages on the house were obtained very easily, with all kinds of thoughts that the big hits will be made and these will be paid back. As previous testimony indicated, they never do. This brought me to shylocks. Again, they like people like me, the reason being they can put their finger on me. I am not a traveling salesman where they will have to hunt for me the next week. They put the finger on me, and I was known in the community as a practitioner who was always available to aid anybody in distress, as far as the health profession. So, they love people like me. They gave and I paid - and they gave, and I paid - they gave, and I paid. The scenario continues, because you are never able to pay back.

Because of my position in the community and in the State of New Jersey, my stealing, the next turn of events was stealing, but it was white collar stealing, as we all read in the paper. I never crept anyplace, or put my hands in anybody's pocket or anything like that. It was very simple. As a practitioner you deal with insurance companies. To make a long story short, there was fraud involved with insurance companies to obtain monies. I never gave a thought as to the consequences, but simply said that they were small enough that nobody would bother with it. Well, somebody did bother with it, and I was indicted. I am not awaiting an indictment. I was indicted a couple of years ago. Upon the indictment I went to trial. At the conclusion of the trial, I was found guilty of fraud. My introduction to the Gamblers Anonymous will be a little peculiar to this hearing, as compared to the others. The State introduced me to Gamblers Anonymous. What I mean by that is, somewhere, somehow, the presiding judge at the trial told me as one condition of sentencing that I was to attend Gamblers Anonymous, among other prerequisites for the sentencing, restitution, community service over a period of time, even weekends incarcerated, four weekends. But, my introduction to the word and to the name was through the State Judge.

Even then after the sentencing - which as you know as lawmakers can be delayed because of appeals - I did not fully grasp the idea that I was going to GA, the reason being, we all will not admit, or I would not admit, to another human being that I am different than you, especially me being on the level of a professional. You gentlemen are considered professionals. I will not admit to anybody that I am different. Well, the gambling continued and my wife upon being introduced to the words of GA thought about it and lingered with it and finally through some acquaintance of hers - I do not know who - she contacted the GA organization and before I knew it, two members, a man and his wife marched into my home - and my first reaction was to throw them out. I looked at my wife and said, "Wait a minute. I better just go along with this, and make everyone happy, and certainly not be discourteous to anybody coming into my home."

Before I knew it, they marched me down that night to a GA meeting, and because of that first introduction to people sitting around the table in a GA meeting, I found out, number one, that I wasn't different than those other fellows around the room. There may have been blue collar and white collar people, but they had the same problem in a different way. Not only that, I thought that I had done the most hideous of crimes, and therefore I certainly wouldn't allow

myself to be associated with people who may be on a lesser scale - or more devious where they stole nickels and dimes. All through the meeting I found out that I was a piker compared to different ways of obtaining money, different ways of hurting people, different ways of making life miserable for a number of people around me. I affected six or seven people. My wife became a dishrag, and my children were emotionally upset, and I borrowed from my parents, and my in-laws, and they were depending upon me because I was a practitioner. They didn't think I was in trouble making all that money --- By the way, I echo the sentiments of the previous speaker. There is no way that I ever made in gambling anywhere - one-quarter, one-eighth, one-sixteenth - as much money as I could have made or did make as a practitioner in the State of New Jersey.

I have the misfortune of falling under double jeopardy, just using that as a legal term, not an actuality. Upon the conviction, my license was revoked in the State of New Jersey, based upon moral turpitude. This is something that took me fifteen years to obtain. So, besides the sentencing, my life's work went down the drain. If it wasn't for my association with GA, I wouldn't have been able to accept this on an adult and normal basis. I also accept things I cannot change. It has been thirteen months, and I have not gambled in any way and I certainly feel that I don't need it. But, I know that if I don't attend a GA meeting at least once a week for the rest of my life that somewhere along the line a crisis could occur, and for whatever reason that disease could rear its ugly head and make me do something that has caused me all this pain. Thank you, gentlemen.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: Thank you very much, Doctor, for your contribution to this hearing. One thing occurs to me. I suppose I am not going to ask the question. I think you said it all when you said that you were not any different.

Doctor, thank you very, very much for your contribution that you have made. I just want you to know - and I suppose I am speaking for the entire Committee - that we appreciate your appearance here. You have made a tremendous contribution, more than you realize.

DR. B.: I hope so.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: Thank you very much. Professor Glenn Reeling.

G L E N N R E E L I N G: My name is Glenn Reeling. I have been a Professor of Psychology and Education at Jersey City State College for the past fourteen years. I have also been a member of the American Psychological Association for the past eighteen years. Recently I have had the opportunity to teach and to conduct independent research for students in a class titled "The Psychology of Gambling." The major learning research project assigned to one class resulted in the attached document titled "Preliminary Report on Responses to Forty Attitudinal Perception Questions Related to Gambling in New Jersey," which you have attached to your study.

Students in the class conducted semi-structured interviews of 627 subjects, and these subjects were residents of the State of New Jersey, because I was teaching in Hudson County and most of the subjects or respondents were from either the college or places in Hudson County or Journal Square or shopping malls. Some of the subjects were encountered in Atlantic City because we went down to Atlantic City to interview people. Some were from Rutgers University.

After the data resulting from these interviews was analyzed, seventeen findings were listed in the last chapter of the report. Although I feel that all seventeen would be relevant to the purpose of this Committee, allow

me to list twelve of them. The respondents to this survey felt that:

1. There are people who could be categorized as compulsive gamblers, and the majority of the respondents knew at least one such person.
2. The extent of compulsive gambling in the United States is underestimated extensively.
3. Compulsive gambling is a form of mental illness.
4. Compulsive gamblers can be cured.
5. Compulsive gamblers can be hurt and hurt others as a result of their gambling activities.
6. Casino gambling will result in positive benefits for Atlantic City.
7. Monies from gambling activities that were intended for education and senior citizens are not being spent for that purpose, and the better-educated respondents tended to support his belief most strongly.
8. Gambling in Atlantic City will eventually be controlled by elements of the "Mob/Mafia."
9. Casinos are not reporting their entire winnings to the State for taxation purposes.
10. Students in the high schools should be aware of the ramifications of gambling, and high school teachers should be trained to recognize the symptoms associated with the child who has a compulsive gambler in the family.
11. More information should be provided to the public regarding the negative aspects of gambling.
12. Funds should be provided by the casinos and/or government to rehabilitate the compulsive gamblers.

Please allow me to make one or two points regarding these findings. The majority of the respondents accept the concept of compulsive gambling, feel it is a form of mental illness which can be cured, and feel the casinos and/or government should provide the financial wherewithal to provide for this cure or rehabilitation. Also the majority of the respondents indicated cynicism regarding both the generic honesty of the total gambling "system" and the resulting positive benefits to the residents of the State.

As an aside, even though the majority of respondents felt that casino gambling will result in positive benefits for Atlantic City, yesterday's issue of the New Brunswick Home News reported that the tax rate for Atlantic City would rise 20% next year. As another aside, the issue of U. S. News and World Report which hit newsstands just two days ago had an article which dealt with gambling

in primarily Atlantic City and how the "Mob/Mafia" was becoming involved in this gambling.

In conclusion, I feel studies would indicate that residents of New Jersey accept the concept of "compulsive gambling" and its negative ramifications -- but they are cynical regarding the positive benefits resulting from the monies which are lost by gamblers at the casinos and other legalized gambling areas.

Therefore, I feel the State would be viewed in a lesser negative light if the State were to devote funds to preventative and rehabilitative programs for gamblers, and the respondents to the study mentioned previously feel these funds could come from either the casinos or State although I personally feel it is from the same source.

One last comment before I finish that report, I happened to send this report to some newspapers, and I guess a point I am trying to make in this report is that even with the best intent of the Casino Control Commission, any enforcement agents that you have, about having gambling appear to be a "good thing" the citizens of the state were led to believe there would be some benefits resulting from it. Unfortunately, that is not the way it is being perceived. As I mentioned, I sent this report to about eight newspapers after I finished it, and I thought it would be received as a scholarly work, but I learned that newspapers try to expound upon the sensationalism of it.

But, to show what this information has done, in the Star Ledger they said, "Poll reveals skepticism on gaming funds." Something in the Daily News New York said, "Many skeptical of gambling money use." The Atlantic City Press says, "Jerseyans doubt funds use." The Home News said, "Casino benefits are not all they are stacked up to be." So, the point I would really like to make is that right now the citizens of the State, I believe, are really receiving an impression that there is a lot of bad with New Jersey gambling, and I really think that with the monies that are being obtained--- And, you are talking about, really, \$75 million a month being obtained as gross revenues for gambling. There should be some really transferred to some sort of a rehabilitative or preventive program. If you take just one-tenth of one percent going to gambling rehabilitation, you are talking about \$75,000 a month. If you even take one one-hundredth of one percent, you are talking about \$7500 a month, which results in more money you talked about being denied before. And, I am pleading for that type of fund for the good of gamblers. Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: Thank you very much. I just want to make the same observations that you made, if this hearing were devoted today on how we were going to spend that \$75 million that you are talking about, the chambers would be filled here. But, we are talking about something else. We are talking about problems that result from that kind of an environment, from that kind of a situation, and the only people who are here are those people who have been deeply affected by it, or those people who have a very, very deep interest in the subject.

That is a sad commentary, really, on our whole society and, as a matter of fact, on some of the things that we are doing today. And, as a matter of fact, it is a sad commentary, too, on our whole question of attitude today. And, as a matter of fact, it may flow over into economics generally, flow over into government, generally. This is the titanic struggle that we are facing today. And, this merely emphasizes what you just said now. It merely highlights the thing.

I think that the hearing today highlighted a number of things. I think it highlighted, number one, that the casino industry is a tremendous industry with tremendous sources of money passing. And, as a matter of fact, they use that money to induce people to come to Atlantic City and to take advantage of the fact that there is gambling there. I think, too, that the hearing highlighted the fact that there are problems associated with gambling, real problems, problems that we just heard about, such as mental health that can ravage an individual or his family and his very life.

I think this might be the beginning of the legislature and may be just a very small beginning of people taking a better look at themselves. I am very, very grateful to all the people who appeared here today, and gave their time. As I indicated to many of the people who testified here, and I think it was evident from the Committee itself, that the Committee paid extraordinary attention to everything that was said. There was a deep empathy from the Committee that was shown here to everyone who testified.

I think - without polling the Committee, and without even discussing this with the members, but just by their attitude - the Committee was very impressed by your testimony here. I will conclude the hearing, and the staff will now prepare a report. We will probably have a meeting where we will hold some general discussion to look at the kind of legislation that could possibly come out of this kind of a hearing.

ASSEMBLYMAN SNEDEKER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, it was a good meeting.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARKERT: I have no question of the witness here, but I will go through the report in its entirety. I promise you that. But, I would like to make some suggestions along the lines that you just mentioned, Mr. Chairman.

I would like to possibly have an opportunity - in this Committee, not in an open hearing - but as far as information is concerned for our own thoughts and discussion, I would like to have an opportunity to go to Atlantic City to be able to view what is going on in that area, and to sit down with representatives of the industry itself right in the area to discuss some of the problems that I have heard today and some of the areas that have been suggested as to participation, whether by the industry or funds generated by the industry. And, after some general discussion and a type of roundtable situation, I, at that point, would also like you to consider establishing some kind of rapport or meeting with the Gaming Commission, so that we can then take the input we have had from here, and from the representatives of the industry and bring it also before the Gaming Commission, and then finally coming back and meeting between ourselves to see whether or not there is some area that we can come forth with legislation or possibly suggestions.

ASSEMBLYMAN OTLOWSKI: Thank you very much. The report of the Doctor will be Addendum "C". And, that will be made part of this report. We are going to make this report available after we have finished to the Gaming Commission, to the Attorney General, to the people in charge of mental health, and to any other human service organization that we think may be of help or of interest.

In addition to that, the Committee will get into the areas that you talked about and probably some additional areas. Again, I just want to conclude by saying that I think the hearing serves many, many purposes, and I am very happy with the fact that we were able to conduct this hearing. It is a good beginning in many areas.

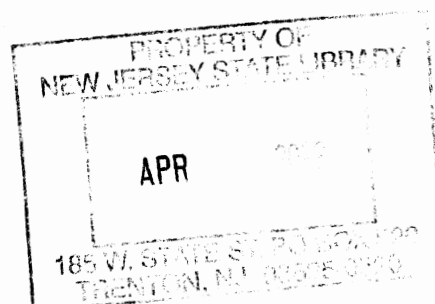
The Committee is adjourned. Doctor, thank you very, very much.

(Hearing concluded)

STATEMENT BY THE DIVISION OF GAMING ENFORCEMENT
ON THE PROBLEM OF COMPULSIVE GAMBLING IN NEW
JERSEY FOR SUBMISSION TO THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY,
ASSEMBLY, INSTITUTIONS, HEALTH AND WELFARE COMMITTEE

By: G. MICHAEL BROWN
Director
Division of Gaming Enforcement
CN-047
Trenton, New Jersey 08625

1X



"You got to know when to hold
'em, know when to fold 'em"
(from a popular song, THE GAMBLER,
recorded by Kenny Rogers, 1978)

In 1976 New Jersey voters affirmed a referendum permitting casino gambling in Atlantic City, New Jersey. Legislation was enacted which provides for strict regulation in the development and operation of casinos. Since 1976, Atlantic City casinos have been developing at a rapid rate. Thousands of tourists and New Jersey residents enjoy the facilities in Atlantic City each day.

The casino industry is providing beneficial effects to this State and is helping to raise Atlantic City to its past position in history as the world's playground. Under the Casino Control Act, N.J.S.A. 5:12-1 et seq., the Division of Gaming Enforcement is charged with the duty of enforcing the laws and regulations governing casino gambling in this State. Functioning in enforcement of the casino industry, it has come to the attention of the Division that some percentage of individuals who come to Atlantic City to legally wager are adversely affected by the opportunity to gamble.

In July of 1979, Rickey Greene of the New Jersey Department of Health, Alcohol, Narcotic and Drug Abuse Unit completed a preliminary

study on compulsive gambling in New Jersey. The preliminary report explained that certain persons in our society are susceptible to a disorder commonly referred to as "compulsive gambling". The American Psychiatric Association uses the term "pathological gambling" to describe the disorder. The preliminary study done by Rickey Greene (hereinafter "the Greene Study") characterizes the compulsive gambler as an individual who cannot control his or her urge to gamble. The disease affects a person's ability to function normally in our society. This person's entire life revolves around gambling activity and its counterpart, money. It is considered to be a progressive disorder which begins with an insignificant degree of gambling and accelerates to the point where the compulsive gambler psychologically and financially destroys himself and those around him. Only a small percentage of persons who gamble have the tendency to become "compulsive gamblers." Those that do become compulsive gamblers are faced with serious troubles.

The story of a compulsive gambler is a sad one, and certain recurrent themes seem to appear. First, the compulsive gambler makes small bets, often during their youth. Some of these bets are made legally and some are not. The person finds himself gambling more and more, increasing his bets as time goes on. All this gambling activity takes money, and as a general rule, the compulsive gambler loses much more than he wins. In order to support his developing habit, the gambler requires more money. As a law-abiding person, these initial gambling funds come from legitimate sources. A paycheck, bank loans and loans from family members are common methods of satisfying mounting debts from gambling losses.

As the debts begin to increase, however, the compulsive gambler may begin lying to banks, family members and friends to obtain additional money to gamble. He continues to be pressured by rising debts and the urge to gamble. Eventually he turns to more clandestine activities to raise money, often stealing jewelry or valuable personal items from his spouse. Meanwhile, the compulsive gambler's family or social life suffers. Completely preoccupied with gambling and raising money to support his habit, the gambling "junkie" neglects those loved ones around him and constantly lies about his whereabouts. His family and job fall by the wayside.

Soon, the legitimate sources of money dry up. The compulsive gambler may then go to loan sharks for money. He may even embezzle funds or commit fraud. Finally, he reaches a low point in his life. He may lose his job, his family, his personal belongings and his dignity. He becomes a desperate and unhappy individual.

The reasons why a person may become a compulsive gambler are several and there is little agreement between authorities on the subject. One author, Edmond Bergler, in his book, The Psychology of Gambling, considers this disorder a form of sado-masochism. Sanford Chapman, another authority on the subject, feels that compulsive gambling is due to a need for tension, suspense and glamour in everyday life. Finally, other authors like Darrell Bolen and William Boyd conclude that there is no one specific reason why a person would become a compulsive gambler. Whatever the reasons may be, the person afflicted disrupts the lives of those around him as well as his own.

The social effects of a compulsive gambler are quite similar to those connected with drug addiction or alcoholism. In an advanced stage, the compulsive or pathological gambler relies upon illegal sources to obtain money to gamble. Loan sharks feed on the compulsive gambler and he often resorts to criminal conduct in order to raise money. A recent study by Robert M. Klein, Master of Human Services, Special Counselor to Atlantic City High School, has revealed that high school students in Atlantic City have shown that they have problems with gambling at this early stage of their life. It is his belief that they have the potential to become compulsive gamblers. Klein noticed that several high school students engaged in illegal activities similar to those of typical adult compulsive gamblers in order to obtain gambling funds. The obvious effects of these crimes will add to the State's burden in the protection of its citizenry.

Beyond criminal conduct, the compulsive gambler may upset the lives of others. His family goes uncared for and household bills pile up. In extreme cases, the compulsive gamblers' family must go on public assistance to survive. Civil suits arise as a result of debts, and bankruptcies are common. Often the compulsive gambler destroys the very things he or she has worked so hard to obtain. One's family, home and financial security become meaningless.

In a 1976 report entitled Gambling In America, the Federal Commission on the Review of the National Policy Toward Gambling estimated that there were 1.1 million compulsive gamblers in the United States and another 3.3 million who have the potential to be compulsive gamblers.

The Commission conducted a separate study to determine the number of compulsive gamblers in the State of Nevada. It was learned that the percentage of compulsive gamblers in Nevada was almost three times the national average. The Commission interpreted this statistic to mean that the accessibility of legalized gambling in Nevada increased the incidence of compulsive gamblers. A New York based group known as The National Council on Compulsive Gambling considers the estimates of the Commission to be quite low and estimates that there are approximately 375,000 compulsive gamblers in New Jersey. The Council also raises another interesting statistic. Each compulsive gambler affects from four to ten other persons. These other persons include family, friends or unrelated individuals. Therefore, the number of persons affected by compulsive gambling must be multiplied. The Greene Study suggests 800,000 persons could be affected in some way by compulsive gamblers in New Jersey.

Although most people can enjoy gambling, it should be recognized that certain persons are unable to control their gambling activities without help and guidance. Often, a compulsive gambler does not know where to obtain help, and indeed may not feel any need for assistance. In recent years, concern has grown regarding the problem of compulsive gambling and a few solutions have surfaced. In the public sector, the State of Maryland has enacted legislation recognizing that compulsive gambling is a social problem. Section 43 of the Annotated Code of Maryland sets forth the Compulsive Gambling Act. The Act defines a

compulsive gambler as follows:

"Compulsive gambler" means a person who is chronically and progressively preoccupied with gambling and the urge to gamble, with gambling behavior that compromises, disrupts, or damages personal, family or vocational pursuits.

The Act provides for a treatment program within the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene specifically designed to treat compulsive gamblers. The Act sets forth the findings of the Maryland Legislature that compulsive gambling presents a serious problem. The Act further provides that the availability of gambling has been shown to increase the risk of becoming a compulsive gambler. Because of its network of legalized gambling, Maryland recognizes its obligation to help those who may become addicted to gambling and has provided funding for the establishment of a project center for compulsive gamblers in accessible locations. These funds are to be used to provide both in and out patient treatment, consultation, education, care services and other forms of preventive treatment or rehabilitation services for compulsive gamblers. These funds are also to be used for additional research and training. Maryland is the only State which has enacted such legislation.

In Greene's study, it is pointed out that there are three (3) Veterans Administration Hospitals that provide professional services to veterans afflicted with pathological gambling. These three (3) hospitals are located in New York, Florida and Ohio. Based on a study done by the Ohio Veterans Administration Hospital, it is estimated that approximately ten percent (10%) of those afflicted with compulsive gambling require

hospitalization. The remainder benefit from professional psychiatric and outpatient care. The Veterans Administration Hospital in Ohio is unique in that it provides inpatient treatment for compulsive gambling. The inpatient program reveals striking data about those compulsive gamblers who have been treated. The compulsive gambler who comes in for treatment experiences all of the symptoms of physical withdrawal. They suffer from cold sweats, headaches, tremors, diarrhea, abdominal pain, insomnia, hyperactivity, confusion and anorexia. After the withdrawal symptoms subside, the patient is treated through individual and group therapy. They are also offered vocational counseling, didactic lectures and recreational activities. The Veterans Administration Hospital then assists in connecting the patient with local chapters of Gamblers Anonymous and also arranges for legal assistance to compulsive gamblers who are deeply in debt.

In addition to publicly financed treatment, privately funded programs exist for the treatment of compulsive gamblers. The primary treatment program is Gamblers Anonymous and its related programs of Gam-Anon and Gam-A-Teen. Gamblers Anonymous, like the highly successful Alcoholics Anonymous, provides a treatment routine where compulsive gamblers meet regularly to cope with their problem. The Gamblers Anonymous program provides counseling for the compulsive gambler. Gam-Anon is specifically targeted for treatment of the spouse of the compulsive gambler. Gam-A-Teen provides therapeutic sessions for teenage children of compulsive gamblers who are so often affected by their parents' illness. There are

approximately 27 chapters of Gamblers Anonymous in New Jersey.

The National Council on Compulsive Gambling was founded in New York City in 1972. This Council was established to provide a center for the study of compulsive gamblers as well as the promotion of effective avenues of treatment. The Council has taken the lead in alerting others to the problem and disseminates information regarding treatment and research on compulsive gambling.

In September of 1980, the National Foundation for the Study and Treatment of Pathological Gambling was incorporated in Texas. This Foundation boasts several prominent casino executives on its Board of Advisors.

Gamblers Anonymous, the National Council on Compulsive Gambling and the National Foundation for the Study and Treatment of Pathological Gambling are all privately funded organizations, short on resources, financing and professional staff. Except for Gamblers Anonymous, the State of New Jersey provides no treatment or counseling problems for these persons who are compulsive gamblers. As stated previously, Maryland is, as yet, the only State to enact legislation to provide for such treatment. As a result of the study done by Rickey Greene, and based on other research in the field, it is apparent that there are certain persons within the population who are abnormally affected by gambling. Legalized gambling, such as casino gambling, has been accepted as a factor which increases the number of persons who are compulsive gamblers. If the projections and current estimates of those New Jersey residents

affected by compulsive gambling are correct, or even partially correct, there is a definite need for further research and treatment services within this State.

A review of New Jersey legislative action over the past few years reveals a trend toward further legalization of different forms of gambling. Recent bills before the State legislature propose Jai Alai, dog racing, and off-track betting on horse races. It has been shown that people in this State and all over the United States participate in some form of wagering. A survey in 1974 by the Commission on the Review of the National Policy Toward Gambling revealed that over 60 percent (60%) of the United States adult population gambled in some manner in 1974. For most of these people, gambling is a pleasurable and controlled activity. Where legalized, gambling provides a substantial revenue source. Unfortunately, a minority of persons are adversely affected by it.

Although legalized casino gambling in New Jersey enhances the recreation industry and provides a great benefit to the residents of this State, it should not be ignored that casino gambling, as well as other forms of gambling, contain certain inherent drawbacks. Compulsive gambling is one drawback that has the potential of posing a serious threat to many of New Jersey's residents. In light of this potential and the existing problems, treatment facilities staffed with trained personnel, psychiatrists and counseling services may be necessary. More research is required to define the scope of the problem. Preventive measures should be taken, such as educating young persons about the

existence of compulsive gambling. In addition, advertising could alert compulsive gamblers and potential compulsive gamblers of counseling programs available.

In order to provide such services, money is needed. Several sources of funding exist to achieve such goals. Private funding is currently the largest source of financial aid. The casino and horse racing industries are a possible source of funds. The State itself, through regulation and appropriation can channel portions of its own revenues from legalized gambling to aid in the treatment of compulsive gambling. Existing hospitals, clinics and other treatment facilities could be enlarged to provide aid to compulsive gamblers.

The Division of Gaming Enforcement is convinced that New Jersey should take positive steps toward facing and controlling the abuse of gambling. Through legitimate means, New Jersey has made gambling available to the public through casinos, lotteries and at race tracks. The State's criminal code has been relaxed to permit wagering among small groups of persons in the privacy of their own home, such as a friendly card game. The trend appears to be toward promoting gambling as a form of recreation and revenue. Casinos are certainly not the cause of compulsive gambling but, based upon studies in Nevada, casino gambling has been shown to accelerate and increase the incidence of compulsive gambling. It is time to take notice of the problems that may be connected with the State's legitimate sources of obtaining revenue. Compulsive gambling can be a serious social problem that affects many of the State's citizens.

In creating the opportunity for its citizen to gamble, the State of New Jersey has created an obligation to provide assistance to those persons who cannot handle that opportunity. The goal of the Casino Control Act is to provide a "successful" gambling venture for the State of New Jersey. In order to achieve complete success, the State should be obligated to make efforts to cope with the problem of compulsive gambling. The Division of Gaming Enforcement would support legislation which addresses and attempts to alleviate compulsive gambling in this State.

