

MASSACHUSETTS CATHOLIC CONFERENCE WEST END PLACE

150 Staniford Street, Suite 5,
Boston, MA 02114-2511
Phone (617) 367-6060
Fax (617) 367-2767

Board of Governors

Most Reverend Sean P. O'Malley, OFM Cap.
Archbishop of Boston

Most Reverend George W. Coleman
Bishop of Fall River

Most Reverend Timothy A. McDonnell
Bishop of Springfield

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October 31, 2005

STATEMENT ON GAMBLING

The expansion of the state's dependence upon gambling is a current and critical issue, which we are compelled to address. We oppose the proposed expansion of gambling in the Commonwealth.

The church sees gambling as something neutral, a legitimate recreational activity when done in moderation. However, we also see that in gambling, especially in casinos and high stake lotteries, there are increased dangers and abuses that warrant vigilance and concern. There is no doubt that gambling can victimize the poor and often surpass "legitimate recreation."

We appreciate why the state is considering additional revenue from gambling to fund various programs. We acknowledge that some of our schools still rely upon revenue from bingo and other games of chance. We seek to lessen that reliance in the future.

However, casinos and the authorization for additional slot machines will raise gambling to a new level in our Commonwealth. In addition these can also encourage addictive gambling. The state should not depend on gambling for resources to pay for needed services.

We urge our state legislators to vote against these proposals.

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Bishop of Worcester

CONTACTS:

Edward F. Saunders, Jr. Esq. (617) 367-6060
Terrence Donilon (617) 746-5775
Ray Delisle (508) 791-5357
Mark Dupont (413) 452-0648
John Kearns (508) 675-5204

Exec. Dir. Mass. Catholic Conference
Archdiocese of Boston
Diocese of Worcester
Diocese of Springfield
Diocese of Fall River