

1                   MR. BARRON: Good afternoon. My name is  
2 Bruce Barron, and I live in suburban Pittsburgh,  
3 Pennsylvania. I am a regional associate for the  
4 Pennsylvania Family Institute and a frequent writer on  
5 issues of policy and politics.

6                   With me as visual aids are my daughter  
7 Tricia and my son Trevor. My wife is pursuing my  
8 younger son elsewhere in the room. Please pardon the  
9 appearance. We are on vacation, but since we're just  
10 completing our vacation and we're passing through  
11 Washington, we figured the odds of passing through  
12 Washington right when your hearing was taking place  
13 was less than, well, less than an individual or a  
14 regional economy striking it rich at the casino. So  
15 here we are.

16                   And since I'm on vacation, my props are a  
17 little limited. Bill Thompson, of Nevada, Las Vegas,  
18 as you know, uses a bathtub to illustrate the  
19 economics of gambling, what's poured in and what  
20 drains out. I couldn't bring a bathtub so these  
21 buckets and a shovel will have to do.

22                   And to give my presentation a Pittsburgh

1 flavor, this bucket represents our beautiful city with  
2 our three rivers and our nationally acclaimed quality  
3 of life and a decent, albeit not booming, economy, but  
4 some think that with casinos we could do even better.  
5 So they want to invest some of our resources, money,  
6 time, political capital, and tourist promotion  
7 efforts, in this alluring dream bucket of gambling.

8           And at first things look pretty good.  
9 Flashy new steamboats coming into town, or a new  
10 construction business, or new buildings when the land  
11 based casinos get finished, unless you're in New  
12 Orleans and the casino never gets finished, but then  
13 things start falling through as the factors that have  
14 made gambling a new loser everywhere in the country in  
15 terms of economic, as well as social, impact take  
16 effect.

17           You've already heard these reasons. If  
18 you could just hold up the signs, I have seven  
19 outlined in my written statement. These are six of  
20 them. I couldn't get crime on because the crime one  
21 was stolen, of course.

22           (Laughter.)

1           MR. BARRON: But these arguments have  
2 convinced persons on both left and right, public  
3 policy experts, media analysts, popular opinion  
4 referendums, that legalized gambling expansion is not  
5 a good idea.

6           The one point I want to make is that worst  
7 of all once a community or a state decides to embrace  
8 gambling, it can never again be what it was. Not only  
9 is it virtually impossible to eliminate gambling once  
10 it's legalized and not only do you have ruined lives  
11 and economic dislocations, but making gambling part of  
12 what your community is known for and part of the basis  
13 by which it seeks to attract others changes that  
14 community's character permanently.

15           In short, not only do you fail to gain  
16 what you expected, but you no longer have as much of  
17 what you started with.

18           This is not a debate about personal  
19 freedom to gambling. Nobody is talking about closing  
20 down Las Vegas or cracking down on the informal  
21 wagering that happens everywhere among family and  
22 friends. Rather it's about whether we'll put the

1 stamp of legitimacy on an industry that thrives on  
2 appealing to greed and fantasy, that undermines the  
3 values and work ethic on which this country was built  
4 and on which we continue to depend.

5 All of us, but especially you, the  
6 honorable members of this study Commission, will give  
7 account to our conscience, to our neighbors, including  
8 those on whom gambling will wreak indescribable harm,  
9 and in the words of our founding fathers, our supreme  
10 judge as to whether this scourge will expand,  
11 continue, or be constrained.

12 Now, my time is up, and I regret that my  
13 use of props has added a new smirch to the historic  
14 reputation of the Watergate Hotel. In the spirit of  
15 the gambling industry, which takes the profits and  
16 lets others clean up after it, I trust you can clean  
17 up after me. However, if that's objectionable to any  
18 of you, I will clean up myself.

19 Thank you very much.

20 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Mr. Barron, I have to  
21 say the mother in me says, "No, you're going to clean  
22 up that mess."

1 (Laughter.)

2 MR. BARRON: Okay. Well, I can't put it  
3 in this bucket.

4 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: I want to thank the  
5 Commissioners, and that is our final witness for the  
6 day.

7 Throughout our time of testimony you have  
8 heard over and over again of the materials that I  
9 bring today or my testimony, and I made the decision  
10 not to try to disrupt by distributing that material.  
11 So all of your packages are available for you as  
12 Commissioners upon your departure.

13 With that final note, the meeting is  
14 adjourned.

15 Thank you.

16 (Whereupon, at 3:44 p.m., the meeting was  
17 adjourned.)

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