

1 COMMISSIONER WILHELM: Mike Brubaker?

2 MR. BRUBAKER: I am, sir.

3 COMMISSIONER WILHELM: Thank you very much, Mr.  
4 Brubaker, for being here.

5 MR. BRUBAKER: Mr. Commissioners, I come here I guess  
6 with several hats. I am a recovering gambler with almost 20  
7 years of recovery but I gambled for 33 years. I am a nationally  
8 certified gambling counselor. I have an intensive outpatient  
9 program in Casa Grande and I serve on the Arizona Council on  
10 Compulsive Gambling. I've also written a book called Deadly  
11 Odds, co-authored, and I also have a booklet that I left for you,  
12 one each, of a video that I did. It's a 50-minute video. I left  
13 one video and 20 booklets, so you're going to have to share the  
14 video.

15 Basically, it's the stories of some people like  
16 you've just heard. I'm surprised these women would admit they're  
17 over 50, but I notice they did, a couple of them. I'm over 50 as  
18 well. I think that, you know, for me the fact that I'm sitting  
19 here is testimony that recovery works and it works for a lot of  
20 people. Unfortunately, it's not available to most people. I got  
21 my recovery in the military and I was sentenced to treatment for  
22 my alcoholism and four years later found out about my gambling.  
23 I gambled for a long time.

24 The thing that strikes me is not the Indian gaming or  
25 the fact that the casinos are close by but gambling has been just  
26 taking off rampantly for the last 20 or 30 years. It started  
27 with lotteries, went to off-track betting here in Arizona. Off-  
28 track betting if I were gambling, I wouldn't have to leave Casa  
29 Grande and drive 45 miles to go to the race track. I could go to

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1 the local bar and drink for four hours and bet on the horses and  
2 I wouldn't bet nine races any more because they have simulcast  
3 and I could bet forever.

4           So what we've done is we've made gambling available.  
5 The casinos came in, made it more available, 15 minutes from my  
6 home. In the last couple of years I've treated two judges in  
7 this state who are no longer judges. You know, I've also been  
8 involved in the treatment of many other people. I interviewed a  
9 lady in the Pima County Jail that took out a contract on her  
10 husband to get the money to gamble with. She hired an undercover  
11 sheriff. She's serving 14 years.

12           This disease devastates families, lives. It's not  
13 the person who is sitting in jail, it's the wife and three small  
14 children of that judge who are on welfare now in a different  
15 state. You know, it just impacts the whole society and I'm not  
16 anti-gambling. I think gambling is great for those folks who can  
17 handle it. You know, there's just some of us who can't. It's a  
18 small percentage but for the ones that can't handle it, it  
19 devastates their lives and their family's lives.

20           I would encourage you to look at reimbursement for  
21 treatment of gambling and I would encourage you to look at  
22 education. There's very few dollars funded for education or  
23 treatment. The government is in the gambling business and in my  
24 mind, is in the final stages of it. They can't live without the  
25 gambling revenue. It's a three-fold disease; winning, losing and  
26 desperation and I think they're in the desperation phase. Thank  
27 you for the time.

28           COMMISSIONER WILHELM: Thank you very much, Mr.  
29 Brubaker.

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