

1 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Len Munsil?

2 MR. MUNSIL: Len Munsil.

3 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Len Munsil, thank you.

4 MR. MUNSIL: Madam Chair, members of the Commission,
5 my name is Len Munsil. I'm an attorney and president of the
6 Center for Arizona Policy, which is a non-profit public policy
7 group that represents thousands of Arizona families. I want to
8 speak to you today, though, not as a lawyer or as a lobbyist but
9 as a father and as a third generation Arizonan, as someone who
10 was raised in this wonderful state before it became entangled in
11 the disruptive, corrupting culture of gambling and I do mean
12 gambling not gaming.

13 Words matter and renaming an issue does not change
14 its essential character. In the dictionary a game is defined as
15 an activity engaged in for amusement or diversion but the
16 definition of gamble uses words like speculation, risk and
17 hazard. The millions of Americans who spent significant amounts
18 of their hard-earned money yesterday on the Power Ball, some
19 standing in line for hours to put down their paycheck or savings,
20 took a risk, they were not playing a game. They were not being
21 amused.

22 Like others who regularly blow their paychecks or
23 savings at casinos, they gambled and they lost. Gambling money
24 corrupts everything that it touches. The people are corrupted,
25 the work ethic is destroyed as we accept the lie that financial
26 freedom is just one bet away. Politicians are corrupted by this
27 issue as we learned here in Arizona during Az-Scam. The industry
28 itself has a record of corruption that is unparalleled. Even the

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1 media is corrupted. Supposedly objective news reporters now
2 become cheerleaders for winning lottery numbers.

3 And can we real expect fair coverage of the problems
4 of gambling when casinos are paying for the traffic plane. It
5 seems that half of Arizona is now sponsored by a casino. Our
6 preschool children here know the casino jingles as well as the
7 Barney theme song. In the course of this work you will hear many
8 statistics. You'll hear about higher rates of bankruptcy and
9 suicide, of family breakups, embezzlements and other crimes.
10 Please remember that behind every statistic is a human life, a
11 family and friends who cared.

12 The young ASU student who took his life last year
13 over gambling debts had a family. The woman who left her infants
14 in her car as she gambled for hours in an Arizona casino had
15 children who needed her. A culture that relentlessly promotes
16 gambling will, of course, create more of these social problems
17 but if we don't have casinos, as we didn't in Arizona for our
18 first eight decades of statehood, there will be fewer
19 bankruptcies, fewer crimes, fewer suicides and fewer families
20 shattered by gambling addiction as you've already heard today.

21 Law, by definition, provides a dividing line between
22 right and wrong conduct. When an activity produces minimal good
23 and great social harm, it can be restricted. That is why we have
24 no free market in heroin or child pornography and that is why for
25 most of our nation's history, gambling has been prohibited in
26 most places, severely regulated in others, and almost universally
27 discouraged as a destructive vice. So on behalf of Arizona
28 families, I would ask that your recommendations and your

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1 conclusions promote a return to that sensible approach to the
2 problem of gambling. Thank you very much.

3 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Thank you.

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