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MR. RAY LASELL

CHAIRMAN JAMES: Ray Lasell.

MR. LASELL: My name is Raymond Lasell. I live in Muskatene, Iowa, 40 miles from Davenport and Bettendorf, Iowa. I think I'm the first and maybe the only person that you'll hear from today who is a recovering gambling addict. I ask you to listen to my story.

I became addicted to crap shooting in Las Vegas in the 1980's. I'm an engineer and a mathematician. I developed a system that I knew would always win me lots of easy money. When I played, I played to win and I played to win big. And I did win big in the beginning. Before long, I became totally mesmerized by the dice, the chips and the action at the dice table. Of course, when I won I would keep on gambling to win more. However, the dice did not always behave as my system predicted. Sometimes I would lose.

When I lost I would keep on gambling to win it back. I was on a disastrous downward spiral, always gambling to win and always ending up a loser. In the 1980's I only had limited opportunities to gamble because riverboat casinos had not arrived in the Midwest. In the meantime I would daydream about shooting craps, playing and winning. I would wake up in the night with cold sweats, dreaming about playing and winning.

Then in February, 1990 God got ahold of my life and by the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ I was saved from my gambling addiction. In 1994 casino riverboats arrived less than an hour from my home. However, by the power of the Holy Spirit I have successfully resisted the temptation to gamble. A man from

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1 our town committed suicide over his gambling losses on the
2 riverboats. They found more than \$20,000 in unopened unpaid
3 bills in the truck of his car. His suicide was not publicized.
4 You won't hear about suicides from gambling. His suicide was not
5 publicized and hardly anyone knew about his gambling problem.

6 Suicide is a common outcome for desperate gambling
7 addicts who have lost all their money. I might have been a
8 suicide. My wife might have been a widow. I speak to you today
9 to remind that gambling is a life and death issue, not just fun
10 and games as the gaming industry wants people to believe. The
11 widow and her daughters of the man in our town who has committed
12 suicide know it's a life and death issue. The sister of the man
13 who shot himself in the parking lot outside the Catfish Ben
14 casino riverboat in Ft. Madison, Iowa knows it's a life and death
15 issue.

16 The father of the 19 year old boy who shot himself in
17 St. Paul, Minnesota after losing \$30,000 at the Indian casinos
18 knows it's a life and death issue. Politicians such as the mayor
19 of Bettendorf that you heard from this morning are thrilled with
20 the vast quantities of money and the local selective positives
21 they refuse to believe or react to the fact about what is really
22 happening to people. They don't want to know the truth about
23 gambling.

24 Gambling is destroying lives. It doesn't belong in
25 the Midwest. Leave it in Las Vegas or some foreign country. May
26 your Commission find the truth about gambling and may God richly
27 bless your deliberations. I'm praying for you.

28 CHAIRMAN JAMES; Thank you.

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MR. ROBERT LUCIOUS, III

CHAIRMAN JAMES: Robert Lucious.

MR. LUCIOUS: Good afternoon. My name is Robert Lucious III. I'm 20 years old and I'm from Gary, Indiana. I'm employed by Valet Parking Services at Buffington Harbor casinos. I've been working for Valet Parking Services for about one year and six months. The reason I feel the casinos are good for Northwest Indiana is because Gary, Indiana really doesn't have a variety of jobs besides fast food. Before I started working in the casino business, I was working at McDonald's. The fast food industry doesn't have benefits like the casinos. The casinos have brought good benefits like health benefits and dental benefits. The job has also helped me get my own car, my own apartment and has also helped provide for me and my one year old son.

CHAIRMAN JAMES: Thank you very much.