opinion. I think it should be clear to all now that
we are all very strong in our beliefs and our
opinions, and but we are going to try to restrain
ourselves so that we can hear as many speakers as
possible.

If we get involved in a dialogue or a
debate, that only takes up time from the public.

With that, I'd like to welcome our first
speaker, Ms. -- is it Roman or Romain?

MS. ROMAN: Roman.

CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Roman. Thank you, and
welcome.

MS. ROMAN: Thank you.

I'm Kim Roman, and I represent No Casino
of Anne Arundel County, Maryland.

Imagine being a child left outside a
casino for hours on end while a parent gambles. I
don't have to imagine it. I lived it. Ironically we
moved to Las Vegas for my mother's health, but because
the casinos played upon my father's addictive
behaviors, supplying him with free drinks and constant
encouragement from scantily clad women to keep
playing, I lost my home, and I lost my family.

My story is not an isolated one. I can't even count the number of times I've seen someone walking to a grocery store, cash their paycheck, play the slots, and leave empty handed.

Of course, the industry will say that they aren't responsible for someone's addiction. Maybe not, but they can and do manipulate it, and they've downgraded the story of my life to the status of anecdotal.

Please don't dismiss anecdotal evidence. There's a real and hopefully live human being behind each and every anecdote, and each of these anecdotes has families, friends, and employers whom they affect. Each true anecdote is a statistic, and each statistic is a fact that this Commission must hear about and must take into account.

Anecdotal evidence had a valid role in the product liability suit against the tobacco industry. There's no difference here. We're holding the tobacco industry accountable for the way their faulty product and deceptive marketing played on people's addictions.
It's ironic that Nevada joined the class action suit against the tobacco industry, yet refuses to take responsibility for their own high pressure marketing of a known addictive product. My 14 year old son recently wrote a research paper on teen gambling addiction. The information was so shocking that he and his 12 year old brother are forming a group called Youth Against Gambling Expansion. Their motto is "Don't Gamble with our Future."

They are preparing brochures to educate teens, parents, and our state legislators. They want our lawmakers to realize that the next generation is the one that must clean the mess created by today's errant decisions.

It's a shame that state governments promote gambling at all since it depends so heavily on addiction to be profitable. They have truly crossed the line from being a regulator to being a partner with the industry.

I hope that your findings will allow them to make truly responsible decisions for those they
have sworn to uphold and defend.

I want to thank you for this opportunity to speak. I'm thrilled that this Commission has been formed, and I charge you with doing what is best for state governments and the American people, not a special interest group that has deep pockets and political influence.

I hope that when you tour the casinos you'll take a moment to step into the back alleys and see what gambling's true effects are on live anecdotes.

Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Dianne Berlin.

MS. BERLIN: Good afternoon. I am Dianne Berlin, founder and chairman of the Lancaster County, Pennsylvanians Against Gambling Expansion.

Thank you for the privilege of speaking.

Our group opposed an off-track betting facility proposed in East Lane Peter Township in the Pennsylvania Dutch Country of Lancaster County. Citizens of that community voted no on allowing small games of chance.