COMMISSIONER WILHELM: Lynn Marcari?

MS. MARCARI: Members of the Commission, in 1978 I married into a wonderful close-knit family, a Norman Rockwell picture of small town America, Sunday dinners at the family home, ball games, parades and picnics. However, it was not long before I realized all was not as it seemed. Gambling was a way of life in this family. Every activity revolved around some form of gambling.

From the youngest to the oldest, there was horse racing, dog racing, card games, bingo, Las Vegas weekends and any and all sports betting. Even the gender of the next grandchild was subject to a bet. During these years, even though I knew in my heart that gambling to this extent was taking over my family, I did nothing. I convinced myself that they were having so much fun and it was nice to see such a close family enjoy each other's company.

Eventually, it was no longer fun and exciting. My dream turned into a nightmare. The lying, the cheating and the stealing began to take its toll and relationships were in constant turmoil. Innocent children were used as emotional pawns throughout these years. The family was in crisis and it was due to a seemingly innocent recreation called gambling. For years I watched as this disease infested the family I loved so much.

I, myself, became a master of the coverup. I made excuses for my gambler's behaviors because I did not know what else to do. I was ignorant and, therefore, unaware of the consequences. That lack of awareness cost me dearly. Many people believe that compulsive pathological gambling is not a
disease; yet the Mosby Medical Encyclopedia defines disease as a
specific marked by a specific set of signs and symptoms.

This is no different than the member of my family who
is suffering from high blood pressure. Fortunately there is
medication for the latter. There is no magic pill, ointment or
surgery to eradicate this insidious infliction. However, I
believe with funding we become aware and with awareness comes
education and with education we can spare many families from the
legacy of psychological, emotional and financial devastation due
to family members' compulsive gambling. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER WILHELM: Thank you very much, Ms.
Marcari. I want to be sure that we don't miss anyone who had
originally signed up. Is Patrick Murphy here? Donald Thurber?
Tom Dorn.