CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Kathy Morrell.

MS. MORRELL: Ladies and gentlemen, I'm here today to tell you what I have witnessed in my community as a result of the Massachusetts Lottery, in Chelsea. Hopefully in your tour yesterday you went to both poor and affluent neighborhoods where lottery sales locations exist.

If you did visit Chelsea, for example, did you notice the numerous scratch tickets littering the ground? Or perhaps you wondered, was it truly necessary to have sales locations in Bellingham square, at a local drug store, a fruit stand, variety store, liquor store, laundromat, supermarket and two blocks away at a pawn shop? Did you question the Lottery's rationale for giving licenses to so many locations in such a small radius?

I myself wonder why the poorest communities in the state have the most licensed Lottery sales agents or why some locations seem to be set up like mini casinos, with Keno, scratch tickets and the numerous so-called, special games.

Then our legislature wants to bring casinos to our state, or at least put slot machines at Suffolk Downs, Wonderland or Raynham, or perhaps run a gambling
boat on the Charles River. What harm does this do, you might query? You are promoting gambling to our children like the tobacco and liquor did before ads were banned on TV and warnings were put on cigarette packs. Please issue warnings on tickets and vouchers at the track and all over casinos that gambling could be dangerous to your health.

The insurance industry will not pay for treatment of compulsive gamblers, rather they hide the issue by using an ICD code for depression, suicidal ideation or a similar mental health term. A greater number of women do not seek treatment because they do not have health insurance. If you are promoting an addictive compulsive behavior among our children and adults, do you not have a moral responsibility to fund treatment programs for those who have had their lives ruined by compulsive gambling? I believe, ladies and gentlemen, that you do.

Note the increase in bankruptcies in our area, the crimes of embezzlement, fraud and theft, which affects not just Fortune 500 companies but state and federal government as well. Are you so naive to think that among your co-workers no one has a compulsive gambling problem? Have you never seen Super
Bowl pools, March Madness tickets and all the rest of that stuff? Look closely at absenteeism on the job among your colleagues, divorce statistics, increased domestic violence, calls to the police, financial problems and lost jobs.

The impact is no different with casinos, I suggest you research the ATM transactions at the casinos, check writing policies that are in force and then go there at 3:00 a.m. and watch the people that are still there. Go to the Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling and get their statistics, better yet, contact all the councils on compulsive gambling throughout our great nation and discover what an impact gambling has on our country.

You need to educate the public and fund treatment programs that have the same modality of treatment throughout the country. I believe this Commission has a moral responsibility to report the truth and in doing so, curb the expanded growth of gambling establishments. If you do not, generations of young people will believe that the spin of the wheel, the toss of the dice, the quick pick or a bet at the track can fulfill their dreams.
Thank you for this opportunity to speak and I look forward to the National Gambling Impact Study Commission's report and your findings.

CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Thank you, you got it all in didn't you?