



January 10, 2017

Gambling Action Alert

Gambling expansion linked to budget plan



A massive package of bills aimed at resolving the state's budget impasse did not get a vote in the Illinois Senate during the two-day lame-duck session.

Senate President John Cullerton said the bills -- including an income tax increase and a massive expansion of gambling -- will be refiled after newly elected lawmakers are sworn in on January 11.

Senate Republican Leader Christine Radogno, who negotiated the bills with Cullerton, said **she hopes the legislation can pass the Senate before Feb. 1.** "One of the big takeaways from this is for the first time we're acknowledging that **we really do need to link the reforms, the revenue and the budget all together,**" said Radogno, of Lemont.

President Cullerton said, **"This was not a tax increase. This is a budget package with reforms."** [Read more](#)

The Senate will hold committee hearings on January 24th--two weeks from today on bills included in the "grand bargain" *Capitol Fax* reported. Rich Miller noted that he was **surprised at the number of Senate Republicans he spoke to who have never voted for a tax hike or a gambling bill in their lives, and yet are saying they can vote for this gigantic package of legislation.**

NOTE: If one part of the package of budget bills is defeated, the agreement will not be implemented. **This is similar to what happened in 2009 when the revenue plan to fund capital construction projects included the legalization of video gambling and Internet Lottery.** Legislators said they were not voting for a gambling bill, they were voting to fund construction projects!

What is in the massive gambling bill (SB 305)?

6 land-based casinos:

Chicago Casino with 4,000 gambling positions - a perpetual license that cannot be revoked.

Casinos in Rockford, Danville, Lake County (Park City, North Chicago, or Waukegan), Unincorporated Williamson County, one of the following townships of Cook County: Bloom, Bremen, Calumet, Rich, Thornton, or Worth with 1,600 to 2,000 positions

Slot machines, video gambling machines and virtual table games at racetracks:

Racetracks in Cook County could have 1,200 electronic gambling devices, transforming them into land-based casinos. Fairmount racetrack in Madison County could have 900 machines and Quad-City Downs could start with 350 machines and increase to 900.

Existing casinos could expand from 1,200 gambling positions to 2,000 by bidding on unused gambling positions.

Gambling could be conducted on Lake Michigan.

Denial of Home Rule powers

Comps from casinos and electronic gambling facilities would not be taxed--coupons, food, non-cashable vouchers, promotions, hotel rooms, etc. [Read the bill](#)

Legislators are eager to compromise to pass a budget--they need to hear from YOU. Gambling is an unstable source of revenue that cannot solve the budget problems.

FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION

1. **Contact your State Representative and State Senator** and tell them to **OPPOSE** the massive expansion of gambling included in the grand budget plan. Ask to meet with your Legislators to share your concerns about the saturation and problems of gambling in Illinois.
2. **Share this Alert with your faith community** and ask them to **CALL** and **PRAY**.
3. **Forward** to 10 others.

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