

ROBERT W. O'DONNELL
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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

September 11, 1983

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: ROB DUNHAM, 843-1700

O'DONNELL OPPOSES POCONOS SLOTS

State Representative Robert W. O'Donnell (D-East Falls) today opposed a bill that would legalize gambling by slot machine in four Pocono counties.

In the keynote speech before the annual convention of the Pennsylvania Travel Council, one of the leading proponents of the gambling proposal, O'Donnell attacked the bill for "trying to despoil the Poconos."

"People go to the Poconos for skiing, for the outdoors," O'Donnell said. "Legalized gambling will despoil the environment and ruin the natural appeal of the Poconos."

"The real issue is not slot machines in the Poconos, but gambling in Pennsylvania," O'Donnell explained. "The legalization of slots in four counties is only a preliminary step towards more extensive gambling legalized county-by-county across the state. The best way to stop widespread gambling is not to let it start."

O'Donnell said "supporters of the bill argue that it will provide new tax revenues for the state. But what we don't need is Atlantic City in Pennsylvania."

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January 23, 1985

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: ROB DUNHAM, 843-1700

O'DONNELL INTRODUCES BILL TO OUTLAW GAMBLING IN BARS

State Representative Robert W. O'Donnell (D-East Falls), the House Majority Whip, today introduced a bill that would repeal legalized card gambling in Pennsylvania taverns.

O'Donnell's bill, which received bipartisan co-sponsorship from an anti-gambling coalition of more than fifty other House legislators, would rescind sections of a state law signed by the Governor last May that permit bars and private clubs to sponsor card tournaments and offer cash prizes to the winners.

O'Donnell called liquor and gambling "two of the most dangerous issues facing the legislature today. If you are to legalize gambling at all — and I don't think you should — it should only be after full and open discussion of the subject, and not through the back door."

The gambling provision in the law was added to an obscure conference committee report initially intended to allow bars and restaurants to serve alcohol with Sunday brunches sold after 11AM.

"The usual argument for permitting gambling is that it raises revenues for state and local governments, but in this case there isn't even that justification," O'Donnell charged.

"After this experience, my feeling is the tavern owners are going to have to come before us in Harrisburg and justify everything they want. If

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GAMBLING REPEAL
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they want dart tournaments, let's talk about darts and vote on darts. If they want bowling tournaments, let's discuss that, too. But there aren't going to be card games and there aren't going to be any cash prizes," O'Donnell said.

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