

Social Concerns



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- ▶ **Local churches are opposed to Gaming.**
 - It is not unusual for religious organizations to initially oppose the establishment of Video Lottery Games. However, in the majority of cases, once these organizations are fully educated and understand the potential long-term financial benefits to the community, they often relax their opposition.
 - The Video Gaming Act has forced a conversion of local “Gray Machines” into highly-regulated VGT’s provided by highly scrutinized operators & locations. The entire VGT industry will be shaped by the response that the IGB receives from local political and religious leaders.
- ▶ **Will Video Gaming in my town open the door to more Gambling, compulsive Gamblers, and Children Gambling?**
 - The Act will actually reduce the number of gaming machines in the state by eliminating un-regulated “gray games”.
 - Unlike other states which have allowed terminals in convenience stores (or even today’s IL Lottery Scratch-off dispensers), the Illinois Video Gaming Act places VGT’s only in Bars & other ‘over-21’ locations. Gaming spaces must also be clearly marked for age restrictions. The threat of license revocation will deter such sales.
 - Low-limit bets contemplated for Illinois’ VGTs (\$2 max. bet/ \$500 max. win) is no more of a threat to create compulsive gamblers than the existing forms of gambling already available to local citizens: Casinos & high-wager, scratch-off lottery tickets.
 - The Video Gaming Act is the only form of legalized gaming in Illinois that specifically earmarks funds to address treatment for problem gaming.

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- ▶ **Video Gaming is a Regressive Tax:** In reality, it is *not* a regressive tax but a “voluntary tax” (not a mandatory tax on citizens/ people choose to participate) which provides direct revenue that benefits both the local businesses & municipalities. It is a “Tax on the Willing.”
- ▶ **Will Video Gaming lead to greater Crime & Violence in my town?** Although this is a commonly stated belief... It is a myth.
 - There are a number of studies (including ones by the Government Accounting Office–GAO) which conclude that there is little evidence of a correlation between increased state–regulated, Video Lottery Terminals & violent crimes.
<http://www.gao.gov/new.items/gg00078.pdf>
 - The diffuse placement of VGTs (only 5 allowed at any one location), along with their state–wide presence in thousands of sites, make these games less of a magnet to crime than results from destination gaming.
 - The money exchanged between the location and player will be dispensed from a secure vault only after tickets are verified by the state’s Central System. The security provided by this system protects the player, the employee, and the location from being targeted for robbery.
 - The additional revenue video gaming brings to establishment owners is incentive to prevent problem behavior for fear of losing their video gaming license.
 - The Police Chief in Algonquin, IL (Chief Russell Laine) has said in public hearings that he has reached out to law enforcement in other states which allow VGTs. In each case, he was re–assured that it has had NO effect on local crime statistics.

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- **Do Gaming & Lotteries really solve problems? Look at Education!...** Gaming is a successful tool for raising money through a “Tax on the Willing”. These funds then provide Local & State Governments an opportunity to decide the best use of this ‘tool’ to solve the problems it’s citizens face
 - FY2011 Lottery Transfers to School Funds= \$610,000,000
http://www.illinoislottery.com/content/dam/ill/documents/subsections/accounting/Annual_Sales_FY-11.pdf
 - Estimated annual Revenue generated by Video Gaming Tax:
 - State (Capital Bill Funding)= \$450,000,000
 - Local Towns= \$90,000,000
 - Bloomingdale= \$287,437 + \$850,000 in capital improvements[See Exhibit A of Presentation for Local Projects funded by Video Gaming Act](#)
- ▶ **More Myths vs. Realities:**
<http://www.icmoa.org/myths--realities.aspx>

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- ▶ **Are there any Direct, Social Benefits that Video Gaming provides to my Town?** There are obvious Social Benefits resulting from the positive use (by the local town) of this new tax revenue... More over, Video Gaming will provide an infusion of needed revenue for many LOCAL, small businesses who have (in many cases) struggled to stay open over the past 5 years.
- ▶ **Local Bars, Restaurants, and Vets Clubs have traditionally been the anchor of a town's unique, social structure & culture:**
 - How many Little League/ Park District Teams are sponsored by these businesses?
 - How often do these businesses enter a float at a local parade? Act as a vendor at the Community Festival?
 - How many local residents have been helped by fundraisers held by (or at) these local businesses or by their owners?
- ▶ **Strengthening Local Businesses results in more Local Jobs.**