

# Crossroads

COMMUNITY CHURCH

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*He has shown you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God. Micah 6:8*

The Road Crew (Board/Council) of Crossroads Church, representing the membership of this congregation, by this letter we publicly declare our strong opposition to the reservation casino complex proposed for Lynwood, Illinois.

Gambling has grown phenomenally in our country over the last fifteen years, and there is no lack of information regarding the impact of gambling on individuals, on society and on our economy. It is now clear that gambling exploits the poor, corrupts human beings, destroys social relationships and ruins economic life.

Our church, along with other churches in this region, often cares for people who have become compulsive gamblers. In addition to addicted gamblers, there are a large number of people for whom gambling has become a major part of their lives so that their income has been severely diminished and their behavior has been seriously corrupted.

We observe at close range what gambling does to marriages. A marriage cannot survive if one of the partners is destroying its financial base. Large gambling complexes, such as that proposed for Lynwood, will be accompanied by prostitution, excessive use of alcohol, and increased crime and suicide. If one of the marriage partners is involved in gambling, the marriage will be at high risk. If both partners are involved, the risk will be more than doubled.

The Lynwood reservation casino is especially threatening for the families of this region. The Ho-Chunk nation that is proposing this casino intends to make it part of what they call a "family entertainment complex". It is difficult to imagine an arrangement that would be more ruinous for families. There is overwhelming evidence that gambling is destructive to individuals and families. Gambling targets poorer families that dream and hope of getting rich. Exploiting the poor in this way slowly destroys our society one family at a time.

Gambling also causes economic destruction. Addicted, desperate gamblers will do anything to get money including obtaining illegal loans and payday loans, stealing from employers and family members, and allowing their children to go hungry, to name just a few. Gambling attacks the foundation of our economic enterprise by destroying the connection between work and pay. It substitutes luck for work and winnings for earnings.

As a church with the responsibility for the care of souls and as moral leaders in our community, we therefore now register our strongest opposition to the reservation casino complex proposed for Lynwood, Illinois. We view the establishment of this reservation casino complex as a direct violation of the divine requirement that we act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with our God.

Amen.

In Christ's Service,

Crossroads Community Church

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