

# STOP THE CASINO 101 COALITION

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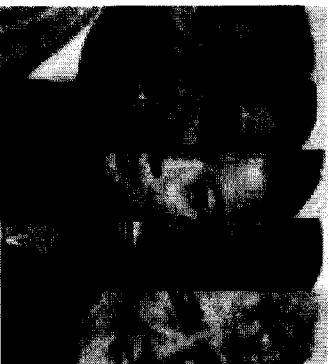
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CLICK PICTURE to learn how the casino will affect low-income families

*"We don't want to get into slot machines and hard-core gambling because it is addictive and destructive in people's lives."*

*"Gambling is a scourge on my People..."*

*Greg Sarris, Chairman of the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria.*

These two quotes from Federated Indian Chairman Greg Sarris echo our own fears: that gambling will destroy people's lives and become a scourge on our community. It's a very real fear: the only thing that seems to increase in casino towns is crime, suicide, addiction and human misery.

What decreases are quality of life, revenues to local businesses and property values. Loss of local business revenue, increased crime and reduced quality of life due to the 24 hour activity, noise and lights make this development unacceptable.

According to statistics, the largest percentage share of gamblers in casino towns are locals. They are us. Over 83% of the money gambled in towns where casinos are located is not new money brought into the local area, it is money that is already in the community.

With the increased opportunity to gamble comes gambling addiction. With gambling addiction comes debt, bankruptcy, domestic violence, drug and alcohol addiction, crime, and suicide. No other addictive population has as high a prevalence for suicide attempts as do addicted gamblers.

[CLICK HERE](#) for California Attorney General's June, 2006 Report on Casinos

[CLICK HERE](#) for info on Gambling Addiction from the American Academy of Family Physicians  
[CLICK HERE](#) to read "Gambling: Who's really at Risk? The connection between gambling and crime"

*Not involved  
New History*

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The cost of this human misery - suicide watches, family counseling, unreported lost job productivity - cannot be underestimated, as these costs would be borne by the community and by the families and friends of the addicts. Also to be considered are the court costs involved with the increases in divorces, crime and domestic violence and bankruptcy, but we cannot assign a dollar cost for the effects of these events on family members, particularly the children.

Were a casino to be built in our communities, we fear that the small-town atmosphere of Rohnert Park, cloverdale and Petaluma would be replaced by "...A porn shop, more drunken drivers, traffic jams and lower property values...." as has happened in North Stonington, CT, home of Foxwoods Casino, the most successful Indian casino in the country. According to North Stonington First Selectman Nicholas Mullane, Foxwoods Casino has "... devastated our small town. We are looking over our shoulder to see what is going to be next." (Hartford-Courant, January 21, 2002).

We in Sonoma County aren't looking over our shoulders; we're staring straight at it, and we would foolish to ignore the lessons learned by other communities such as North Stonington. With a casino, our rural, agricultural heritage and our small-town way of life, which we chose to protect with the passing of the Sonoma County General Plan, would be gone forever.

[CLICK HERE for More Information on Gambling](#)

But more than all this, we most fear the real danger to the youth of this area. Gambling - and gambling addiction - among youth is up by double-digits, and a recent Nebraska study reported gambling among children as young as ten.

Our community has an obligation to our youth, including the Sonoma State students who join us each year. It's our job to make sure they all stay safe.

This is a community built on strong family values. Agriculture, the environment, family, work and school are integral parts of what defines Sonoma County. Bringing a sprawling casino that would dominate the region in every conceivable way could only have the end result of dominating Sonoma County youth, and coloring their values, their dreams and their aspirations.

[CLICK HERE for More Information on Gambling & Children](#)

Stop the Casino 101 Coalition: Rohnert Park, CA  
707-793-2355 ~ [info@stopthecasino101.com](mailto:info@stopthecasino101.com)