



# ILCAAAP

Illinois Church Action on Alcohol & Addiction Problems

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## Gambling Alert - March 31, 2022



### Help available for Illinoisans suffering from gambling addiction

March is Problem Gambling Awareness Month in Illinois. Whether it's betting on sports, scratching cards, roulette, poker, the slots, the casino, the corner bar, or just opening up the laptop, gambling is hard to avoid, said Patrick Laughlin, deputy director of communications for the Illinois Department of Human Services. During March Madness, more young men under 30 are picking up the gambling habit, he said. "You can't watch a sporting event without having the odds pop up. The commentators even talk about what they are betting," Laughlin told The Center Square. The proliferation of video gaming machines has made gambling more convenient than ever. Illinois now has 10,000 video gaming terminals in restaurants and other outlets across the state, Laughlin said. People who would never get in their car to go to a casino or a racetrack can now gamble when they are out for a hamburger. Most people lose a little money and go on with their lives, he said. But for up to 4% of the population – thousands of Illinoisans – gambling can become an obsession that ruins their lives. The goal of the Council on Problem Gambling is to help people find their way out of misery, Laughlin said. No matter how much you lose, they can help you find recovery. [Read](#)

**There's a new hot hand in the casino stakes**

Mayor Lori Lightfoot pulled off a card trick last week in Chicago's casino deliberations. Or maybe she dealt anew hand. It's Bluhm who many insiders believed had the inside track on this. Bluhm was behind two of the five initial bids for a casino site. He formed a strong local partnership to boldly propose taking over Lakeside Center, the oldest and least used convention hall at McCormick Place and the one needing the greatest amount of fixing up. Another bidder, Bally's also turned in a plan to use other parts of McCormick Place property. From the looks of it, Bally's is gaining on Bluhm, if it hasn't pulled ahead, and the complex Hard Rock air rights deal, touching many public agencies, is hanging by a thread. Three main points the city made in its report invite that conclusion. The factors listed in picking a winner: 1.) How much money the casino will make? Remember, this is supposed to bail out the police and fire pension funds. 2.) How quickly can it get started? 3.) Does the company have any conflict with other casinos? [Read](#)

### **The 'Holy Grail' of gambling could break American sports betting wide open**

“California is the holy grail of U.S. sports betting markets,” said Daniel Wallach, a Florida-based attorney who has advised various players in burgeoning sports wagering states. “This is going to be a half-a-billion-dollar battle for control of the most lucrative betting market in the world.” Thirty-three states and Washington, D.C. have authorized sports betting, birthing a sector expected to generate tens of billions of dollars in revenue once those markets are fully operative. The explosive growth follows two-and-a-half decades in which Congress gave Nevada an effective monopoly on athletic wagering in America. [Read](#)

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