



**Testimony of Dave Bydalek, Policy Director,
Nebraska Family Alliance, on LR416CA, Before The
General Affairs Committee, February 10, 2014**

Chairman Karpisek, members of the General Affairs Committee, my name is Dave Bydalek, Policy Director for the Nebraska Family Alliance. I appear before the committee today to signify our opposition to LR416CA.

We believe that casino gambling, especially the evolving form of casinos dependent upon video slots, will be bad for Nebraska's families and economy. Since the National Gambling Impact Study over 20 years ago, the nature of gambling in casinos has substantially changed. In 1991, there were about 184,000 slot machines in the United States. In 2010, that number grew to 947,000, a more than five-fold increase in less than two decades. Slot machines and other computerized gambling machines now occupy nearly all of the space on the casino floor.

A modern slot machine is a sophisticated computer, engineered to create fast, continuous, and repeat betting. These slot machines are carefully designed to ensure that the longer you play, the more you lose. These machines are highly addictive, and are engineered to make players lose track of time and money.

Problem gamblers also constitute a substantial portion of the revenue base for casinos. According to a studies conducted over the past decade or so, problem gamblers account for 40 to 60 percent of slot machine revenues.

The Nebraska Family Alliance believes that because of the highly addictive nature of these video gambling devices, they will provide little economic benefit, and lead to staggering social costs. There is absolutely no doubt that this proposal will result in more problem gamblers in Nebraska, and the bottom line is that many Nebraska families will suffer as a result of the utilization of this "new technology."

Gambling addiction is devastating to those whom it touches, with demonstrated links to bankruptcy, crime, divorce, domestic violence, child abuse and neglect, and suicide. It will also prey on Nebraska's most vulnerable citizens – children and the poor.

There are no doubt many people who can enjoy gambling and do not become problem gamblers. Historically, however, gambling has been understood as an activity which created problems for the entire society. It is not an issue that can be looked at in a vacuum. It has produced numerous social costs and harmed families, finances and reputations. The Nebraska Family Alliance believes that opening the door to more of these problems is bad public policy.

We would therefore respectfully ask that the committee indefinitely postpone LR416CA.

Dave Bydalek
Policy Director

