

# INTRODUCING THE LAW

Massachusetts does not have a law prohibiting gambling or betting on animal races. These controversial topics are heavily debated, as some people are against gambling, while others enjoy it. The 2014 election is proposing a law: "Expanding Prohibitions on Gaming" (booklet). This is a major question because Wynn Casinos hopes to build a casino in Everett, Massachusetts. A yes vote wishes to outlaw any form of gambling, casinos, or bets on simulcast greyhound races (booklet). In opposition, a no vote would keep the law as it stands today.

The proposed question is this: Vote yes to create a law that mandates businesses of 11 employees or more to give 1 hour of paid sick time to its employees per 30 hours of time spent on the clock adding up to no more than 5 days per year. These sick days allow the employee to miss work for the reason of taking care of themselves, a spouse or a child during a time of illness (physical, mental, injury, care/therapy or diagnosis) as well as to recover from physical abuse or routine doctor's appointments. Employees of smaller companies earn unpaid sick time at the same rate. The law also protects employees from punishment for missing work during excused time off. A no vote creates no law and leaves things as they currently are. The dilemma: Voting yes would give security to low wage workers and workers with families but may potentially ruin small businesses. Voting no leaves low wage workers without this safety net, which many believe should be a basic human right, but will allow businesses to continue operating as they have been.

My family is also pushing for a no vote because we live so close to Everett and they hope it would bring the value of our house way up. They want to sell the house but personally, I want to live here until I am on my own. Our house is unique being that it is a two family house and that we live in it as one. We would sell the house as a two family and my parents would then move to New Hampshire. I have a life down here and it scares me that they are so eager to move away and I will have to scramble to figure out my options. My parents say every day that if the home equity increases, they are gone. They influence my vote a lot because I really want them to be happy and as they reach retirement, I want them to live in a place that makes them truly pleased.

I live about four blocks away from Everett and even though I don't live next to the area of where they want to build the casino, I feel that Malden would also be highly affected by the casino along with other cities such as Revere and Boston. Casinos bring addictiveness in gaming, drinking and drugs and I do not think the government can control such a matter. They can try to enforce it but how can the government control one person when there are going to be hundreds of thousands or even millions to control. With all of that comes crime and that crime will spread. Malden may not be the best city in the world but compared to other cities, crime really hasn't been a huge issue. I would personally hate to see the schools I went to crumble because of the students and bad behavior. Although it may not seem it all the time but I actually take pride in the city I live in and where I came from. The Greater Boston Area would never be the same again. I honestly do not think Everett is going to be prepared in any way for what the casino is going to bring and that being their police force. They are going to need more police officers which will mean more money to them and less to the city for road repair and clean-up crews.

PERSONAL INFO: WHAT IS IMPORTANT?

Although there would not be any immediate change passing this bill, the time for change is now. We have single-handedly destroyed this planet and the repercussions are alarming. Even though there are plenty of recycling agencies that make it "more accessible" to recycle and yet still many of us continue to do nothing. A mere 10 out of 50 states have bottle bill legislation a yes vote would continue to propel the United States forward in social and political issues as well as create jobs for people that will help the economy already New York has created 4,452-5092 jobs and Michigan 4,888. This has a positive effects on not just the U.S. but rather the whole world's environment as a whole.

In addition, casinos prey on low-income families. These are the people who feel that they cannot make money any other way, so they resort to gambling (Eagen). Eagen claims, "Organized gambling is a scam, and it particularly preys upon people with lower incomes... whose families can least afford to lose the money" (Eagen). This is detrimental to families because their money is gambled away. Low-income families are already struggling financially; gambling at a casino will push them further into debt.

Who would benefit the most from sick days legislation? The proposed legislation would mostly benefit low-wage earners (disproportionately women and minorities) in the service and hospitality industries. Unsurprisingly, those who are at the bottom of the income levels represent the majority of workers lacking paid (or unpaid) sick leave benefits. In the United States, while over 80 percent of workers with an annual income over \$65,000 have paid sick days benefits, less than 30 percent of those with yearly earnings of less than \$20,000 have it (Boghun). Data from the Bureau of Labor indicates that only 25 percent of part-time workers have paid sick days (Isidore). [INSERT statistics for MA]. Allegedly, of the 900,000 workers lacking paid sick time in Massachusetts, one in four fear reprisals from employers (including being suspended or fired) if time is taken off due to personal illness or that of a loved one (Johnson; Radio Boston; ADD REFS). Similar concerns have been expressed by low-wage workers nationwide (REFS). With few exceptions, the efforts launched by social and worker organizations in several cities and states to promote sick leave legislation have been met by the approval of measures in city councils and state legislatures prohibiting that paid sick days becomes a ballot initiative.

PARAGRAPHING: TOPICS + CONNECTED TOPICS

Hannah Dreier reports on the crime rates in Las Vegas, which houses many casinos. Las Vegas has recently been criticized as increasingly dangerous due to a few scandals involving rape, murder, and assault (Dreier). Tourists are hesitant to travel to Las Vegas and gamble because these events took place near Las Vegas Boulevard, which is home to the major casinos. But these violent acts occur everywhere. Crime in Las Vegas is not different than crime elsewhere (Dreier). Violence “fell 13 percent in 2012, from 256 to 223 incidents, and is down 11 percent for the first part of 2013, with 50 incidents reported” (Dreier). Overall crime rates in Las Vegas have actually declined. This disproves the conception that casinos increase crime rates.

““The question itself presents some issues for workers and small business owners,” said Bill Vernon, state director of the National Federation of Independent Business . “First of all, it will cost money. It’s going to hurt workers in one of a few buckets: Wages, vacation time, retirement benefits, health care benefits. And I would contend that workers would put sick time on the bottom of that list in terms of benefits. You’re going to give up something.”” (Akilah Johnson, Sick leave measure divides workers, businesses). Vernon may be correct, that the earned sick pay will have to come from elsewhere, but to what extent? Is he assuming that every Massachusetts resident will be abusing the new law, or is he basing it off of current statistics of paid leave?

Question 1 is basically asking for the repeal of the Gas Tax Index that was imposed by the legislative in 2013. Gas or Fuel Excise taxes are a tax on fuels such as diesel, kerosene, alternative fuels, compressed natural gas and fuels in aviation.

“In general, Sec 4041 imposes excise taxes on fuels used for specific purpose, including powering highways vehicles, trains, motor vehicles, motorboats and aircraft. The person selling the fuel to the owner, lessee or other operator of the vehicle is responsible for the tax.” (Bring Clarity to fuel excise Taxes and Credit)

QUOTATIONS: USING AS EVIDENCE  
OR  
USING IN PLACE OF ANALYSIS