



WISCONSIN FAMILY COUNCIL  
Marriage|Family|Life|Liberty



## Church Connection

April 2018

### *Strengthening, Preserving & Promoting Marriage, Family, Life & Religious Liberty*

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*For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?*

Mark 8:36-37

*But godliness with contentment is great gain...But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts...*

I Timothy 6:6 & 9a

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### **Join us for...**

*“Punching Holes in the Darkness: Equipping Christians To Bring Light to the Critical Issues of Our Day”*

A presentation by Julaine Appling, WFC president

Thurs., April 26, 6-8 p.m.,  
Sun Prairie Pizza Ranch

Thurs., May 10, 6-8 p.m.,  
Domenico’s Italian  
Restaurant, Beloit

Register online at  
[wifamilycouncil.org](http://wifamilycouncil.org)  
or call us at

888-378-7395.

### **Not Something To Brag About**

As our state’s largest city, Milwaukee has many tourist attractions. However, the Potawatomi Hotel and Casino surpasses them all in terms of visitors each year, with nearly 6.5 million people visiting in 2016. This so-called “destination” has more people visit annually than the next four ranked attractions in Milwaukee combined (Brewers, 3rd Ward Milwaukee Public Market, Brookfield Zoo and Wisconsin State Fair).<sup>1</sup> This fact should disappoint us all.

Then again, there are casinos all over Wisconsin. In Wisconsin, only Native American tribes can own and operate a casino. The eleven tribes in Wisconsin own and operate over 20 casinos, ranging from mammoth ones like the Potawatomi in Milwaukee to small boutique casinos that are typically part of a convenience store in rural northern areas. The net result is that no one in Wisconsin is more than a two-hour drive from a casino. Statistically, the closer a person lives to a casino, the more likely he or she is to become a problem gambler.

Apparently over 20 casinos isn’t enough, because the tribes keep pushing for more.

Right now applications are being considered at the federal level for off-reservation casinos in Shullsburg and Beloit. The tribes make extensive promises to local citizens in order to generate support for expansion.

If either of these proposals gets approved, then it will be up to the Governor of Wisconsin to approve or deny the expansion of casinos to off-reservation locations. Once an off-reservation casino is approved, the flood gate will be opened for the other tribes to apply for off-reservation sites.

Research shows where casinos are located, crime increases and local businesses suffer. Gambling destroys individuals and families, is associated with other addictions, too often results in suicide, and much too often results in problem



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**A few biblical considerations relative to the issue of gambling:**

- For some to win, others must lose. This is totally inconsistent with our responsibility to love others as we love ourselves (Matt. 22:39), or of treating others the way we would like to be treated (Matt. 7:12).
- Gambling appeals to the baser element of greed, which is lust for the material (Prov. 23:4-5).
- Gambling appeals to the love of money, and loving money is a source of all kinds of evil (I Tim. 6:10).
- God calls us to honest labor as the means of meeting our needs (Gen. 2:15, Prov. 14:23, II Thess. 3:10, etc.), while gambling promotes the idea of obtaining wealth apart from labor.
- God pronounces judgment on those who oppress the poor, something that gambling is notorious for doing (Psalm 72).

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gamblers committing crimes to feed their habit. More casinos means more destruction.

But casinos aren't the only form of gambling. We also have the state-run, state-sanctioned lottery, with its vast array of games and slick advertising seeking to woo people to buy a ticket and become an instant winner. Funniest thing about lotteries: in order for the state to win, the citizens must lose, and lose they do—especially those who tend to be the most frequent ticket buyers: those who can least afford to gamble.

Wisconsin is also flirting with legalizing online gambling. Under our current law, online gambling is illegal. But the Daily Fantasy Sports games, which are online gambling by another name, are alive and well—and will continue until our Attorney General decides to shut them down. Related to this form of gambling, is a New Jersey sports betting case that is currently before the US Supreme Court. Experts say depending on how this case goes, we could be looking at legalized sports betting in our state. This type of gambling would be largely online, which means the targeted audience will be teens and young adults, the very group that has the least amount of defense against developing an addiction.

Consider these statistics from the Wisconsin Council on Problem Gambling. Approximately 333,000 Wisconsin residents have a gambling problem. Calls to the Wisconsin Council on Problem Gambling's 24-hour Helpline have increased 281% since 1996. The average debt of callers contacting the Helpline is \$38,000. Seniors and adolescents are at high risk to become addicted to gambling. Gambling related embezzlements continue to rise in Wisconsin. Right at 65% of compulsive gamblers commit crimes to finance their gambling.<sup>2</sup>

Clearly, we already have a gambling problem in Wisconsin. Tragically, the giant Potawatomi in downtown Milwaukee is just the tip of the iceberg. It's not something we ought to be bragging about. It's something we should actually be doing something about, family by family and community by community.

<sup>1</sup><https://www.bizjournals.com/milwaukee/subscriber-only/2017/09/29/top-milwaukee-area-special-attractions.html> <sup>2</sup><http://wi-problemgamblers.org/about/wisconsin-council-on-problem-gambling-fact-sheet>

## About Wisconsin Family Council

*Wisconsin Family Council is a 501 (c)(3) organization that has been advancing Judeo-Christian principles and values in Wisconsin since 1986. We have largely done this by informing Wisconsin citizens, policymakers and churches about the important legislative and cultural issues so that they can be involved in strengthening, preserving and promoting marriage, family, life and religious liberty in our state.*

*"Church Connection" is published monthly by WFC and is available to churches in Wisconsin.*

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