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CONTACT: Father Gene McKenna 401 847 6153
Don Booth 401 847 5309

Anti-Casino Group Reelects McKenna, Will Oppose Backers of New Gambling

The Rev. Eugene J. McKenna has been reelected president of Citizens Concerned About Casino Gambling (CCACG), the non-partisan, volunteer Rhode Island organization that has been in the forefront of opposition to casino gambling in the state since it was formed in 1977.

Elected to serve with Father McKenna as officers of the 30-year-old organization were Nancy Corkery, vice president; David Wixted, secretary; Peter McOsker, treasurer; and Donald Booth, assistant treasurer.

In accepting a xxxth term as CCACG president, Father Gene, the pastor of St. Lucy's Rectory in Middletown, said:

“Casino gambling is an issue that won't go away, no matter how many times the people of Rhode Island vote against it. Unfortunately there is a group within the General Assembly that is as addicted to an expansion of gambling as are the gamblers – many of them poor and elderly – who waste their limited resources in the vain hope of getting something for nothing.”

He said CCACG would publicize the positions of legislators on casino gambling as well as on such related issues as allowing Twin River and Newport Grand, the state's two video slot machine halls, to remain open 24 hours and to expand into new kinds of gambling such as electronic blackjack tables.

“We intend to oppose candidates who support the expansion of gambling,” Father Gene said, “and to help candidates who oppose more gambling no matter which party they belong to.”

As a first step, he said CCACG's expanded website (nocasinori.com) would post the positions of state Senators and Representatives so that their constituents can learn where they stand and how they vote.

“It will not be easy to defeat the new proposals to expand gambling in the state, but we have beaten them before and we will do so again,” Father Gene said. “And this time we will seek to defeat legislators who refuse to follow the wishes of their constituents and can't seem to understand what 'no' means.”

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