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Studies Show Potential Economic Impact, Social Costs of Legalized Casino Gaming in Ohio

Cleveland, August 24, 2005—Ohio’s leaders, lawmakers and citizens now have solid information to determine whether legalizing casinos is a good idea for Ohio. The Greater Cleveland Partnership and some leaders from the Cincinnati business community today released the findings of two studies they commissioned to examine the state-wide economic and social implications if casinos were to come to Ohio.

The studies, representing the most comprehensive analysis of the gaming issue undertaken in more than a decade, were done by researchers at Strategic Partner Management Consulting and the Maxine Levin Goodman College of Urban Affairs at Cleveland State University.

Significant study findings include:

- Ohio residents are already participating in games of chance and skill in and around Ohio
- Ohio dollars are leaving the state, generating tax revenues and jobs in other states
- Social costs of Ohio’s problem gamblers are borne entirely by limited lottery funding (\$350,000 a year)
- Social cost of gambling are not insignificant; over the lifetime of the adult population, 109,000 additional Ohioans could become problem or pathological gamblers
- Potential revenues from casinos at 11 surrogate locations and the seven current horse racing tracks is an estimated \$4.071 billion a year, resulting in about \$610 million per year in state and local tax revenues
- Casinos could generate \$3.7 billion in temporary construction output (41,000 construction jobs) and generate and leverage a total of \$8.2 billion in annual operating output (85,000 operating jobs)
- Best practice approach to gambling prevention and treatment could cost \$29.7 million a year

The model used by the researchers places an emphasis on major metropolitan areas, seals off Ohio’s borders to reduce the number of Ohioans traveling to a casino in a neighboring state and seeks to avoid situations where Ohio’s casinos would compete against each other. The study is not a specific proposal for casino gambling locations in the state, nor is it an endorsement of casino gaming in Ohio. Additionally, no attempt was made to determine the potential use of gaming revenues or the appropriate regulatory structure.

“We consider this study a first step in assisting citizens and leaders at the state and local levels in reaching sound policy decisions about gaming in Ohio,” said Joe Roman, President and CEO of the Greater Cleveland Partnership. “It is important that we arm ourselves with facts when making decisions critical to the future of Ohio.”

Now that the studies are complete, leaders across the state can take time to consider the findings before taking a position on the legalization of casinos in Ohio.

For additional information, including the complete published studies, an archived copy of an informational webcast that includes questions and answers with the researchers, and other documents relating to the study, go to www.ohiogaminginfo.org.

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