



End the Unfairness and Inequality Created By  
Government-Sponsored Casinos and Lotteries

# National Stop Predatory Gambling Week of Prayer

## September 20-27, 2017

*A Suggested Prayer Guide for Churches*  
*Followed By Ideas on How to Organize a Prayer Vigil*

### Why We're Taking Action

We believe in improving the lives of the American people, freeing us of the lower standard of living, exploitation and fraud that predatory gambling spreads.

Predatory gambling is when state governments partner with powerful corporate gambling interests to use gambling to exploit and defraud citizens and their communities across the United States.

### Prayer Guide for Churches

The following guide is designed to direct houses of worship and individuals through a “season of prayer” concerning the issue of predatory gambling. It also includes suggestions on how to organize a prayer vigil.

The national organization [Stop Predatory Gambling](http://stoppredatorygambling.org) is asking people of faith to spend time during the week of **September 24-30, 2017** asking God to give us wisdom and courage to speak out and to do everything possible to end the scourge of predatory gambling that is currently infecting our society.

Feel free to use the following guide as a way to lead your congregation in prayer corporately, in small groups, as families or as individuals. We also ask that you share your experiences with us via email, Twitter, Facebook or Instagram. [mail@stoppredatorygambling.org](mailto:mail@stoppredatorygambling.org). Send pictures, tell stories and/or share the number of people participating in your season of prayer.

### Pray for the following:

1. **Victims of predatory gambling and their families**—Bobby Hafemann from Oregon took his life because he became addicted to electronic gambling machines. Melynda Litchfield, a Registered Nurse from Illinois, had her life permanently and profoundly ravaged by an addiction to slot machines. These are just two of the millions of people who have been damaged by state run gambling.
  - a. Isaiah 51:12
  - b. Isaiah 66:13
  - c. 2 Corinthians 1:3-7

2. **The citizens of local communities, our state and the nation**—Pray that people will come to realize that materialism (the worship of money and material possessions) never satisfies. Predatory gambling has helped advance the mistaken belief that a person can serve two masters, but the Bible says a person cannot serve both God and money.
  - a. Ecclesiastes 5:10
  - b. 1 Timothy 6:10
  - c. Luke 12:15
  - d. Luke 4:18-19
  
3. **Government leaders and lawmakers (politicians)**—Political leaders often become addicted to predatory gambling, not as individuals, but to the revenue stream that is promised by commercialized gambling lobbyists. Government officials often “buy in” to the false claims that gambling is going to provide unrealistic streams of revenue that rarely materialize. When those promised amounts of income do not meet the levels that were projected, government leaders will often shield their eyes from the human suffering predatory gambling has caused and then seek to expand the reach of gambling through more promotion and more types of gambling. Pray that God will give these political leaders the wisdom and the courage to oppose the expansion of predatory gambling, understand in their hearts what a spectacular failure it has been, and then begin to phase out government-sanctioned gambling all together.
  - a. Psalm 22:28
  - b. 1 Chronicles 29:12
  - c. 2 Chronicles 7:14
  - d. 1 Timothy 2:1-2
  
4. **Business and community leaders**—Chambers of Commerce, corporations, small business owners and civic organizations wield a great deal of influence in our culture. Pray that they will partner with the faith community, government leaders and predatory gambling opponents to stop and reverse the expansion of commercialized gambling in local communities. Most area businesses pay the price when commercialized gambling is legalized because it redistributes money that would have been spent locally on good and services and gives it to out-of-state gambling interests. Commercialized gambling also contributes to embezzlement, foreclosures, bankruptcies, government corruption and crime rates, all of which affect the business climate.
  - a. 1 Thessalonians 4:9-12
  - b. James 4:13-17

5. **New leaders and predatory gambling opponents who may grow weary—** Whether government, civic or church leaders, pray that individuals will see the needs of people who have been victimized by government-sanctioned gambling and sense a call to minister to those individuals and speak out against the commercialized gambling enterprise which is taking advantage of people. Pray, too, for those who have been engaged in ministry and predatory gambling opposition efforts to remain energized and faithful to the just cause of stopping predatory gambling.
  - a. Isaiah 40:28
  - b. Matthew 9:37-38
  - c. Galatians 6:9
  - d. 2 Thessalonians 3:13
  
6. **Communities of faith—**Churches, synagogues and other houses of worship often suffer when members of their congregations become addicted to gambling. Not only do donations go down because members are gambling away their financial assets, but those individuals and families will often come to the same faith communities seeking financial assistance. Pray that faith communities will have the courage to speak out against predatory gambling, while at the same time, showing compassion to and having the resources to help individuals and families that have fallen victim to predatory gambling.
  - a. Psalm 12
  - b. Matthew 7:12

## Tips on Organizing a Prayer Vigil

### **Desired Outcome**

What do you want to happen as a result of this event? Be as specific as you can (for example: “We want the mayor to issue a statement on predatory gambling,” or, “We want 30 people or more to sign a postcard to their Congressperson, state officials and/or local officials.”)

### **Leadership and Recruitment**

- 1) Consider inviting prominent faith leaders in your community who could attend and offer prayer. Which leaders best represent the faith communities you are aiming to engage? Will there be a leader/emcee to get the vigil started and lead in prayer?
- 2) What natural networks in your community or place of worship can you tap into? Who leads those networks?
- 3) Do you want people in policy-making positions to come? If you invite your political leaders and they decline the invitation to attend, make sure they receive any press releases and/or press coverage from the event as follow-up.

### **Publicity**

- 1) Flyers, newspaper ads/articles and/or radio/TV announcements—What best reaches your audience? Consider placing an op-ed or “letter to the editor” of your local paper to promote the vigil.
- 2) Our organization can help you with sample press releases and press advisories before the event, as well as a press release for use after the event.
- 3) Take pictures and video/audio recordings. Send your pictures and video to local and national offices and place on social media. Collect blog posts, other pictures, and articles about the event from every source possible. We hope to compile stories and statistics from all national events for distribution after the **National Stop Predatory Gambling Day of Prayer**.