



April 20, 2020

Dear Governor,

We are writing to call on you to immediately shut down the marketing and selling of all state lottery gambling games until the financial turmoil caused by the coronavirus has passed. It is essential that these games be shut down between now and at least 30 days after federal stimulus payments are received by American families.

The reason is simple. Federal tax dollars are being sent to American families in order to put food on the table, make rent or mortgage payments, or provide for other daily necessities – not to subsidize state lotteries.

There is a mountain of facts showing many citizens gamble on the lottery to change their financial condition, and even more so when they are feeling a sense of desperation.¹ Yet state government is continuing to market its lottery gambling games at the very same moment that citizens are receiving their economic relief checks from the U.S. Treasury.

Luring citizens to lose their money on lottery gambling games during this time defeats the intended purpose of the stimulus. Government sending stimulus and unemployment checks to families in need while states continue to operate lotteries will result in greater financial loss for our citizens, rather than fulfilling the intent of providing for essential needs and encouraging consumer spending to benefit the economy and create jobs.

State lotteries are one of the root causes why more than 60% of Americans had less than \$1000 in savings *before* the financial distress caused by the coronavirus pandemic.² State governments have turned a nation of small earners, who could be small savers, into a nation of habitual gamblers on course to lose more than \$1 trillion of wealth to government-sanctioned gambling over the next eight years.³ **At least**

¹ "Living in Truth: Lotteries Worsen Opportunity, Reduce Mobility Out of Poverty and Deepen Budget Problems," A Briefing on State Lotteries by Stop Predatory Gambling, April 20, 2020

² Bankrate's Financial Security Index, 2018, <https://www.bankrate.com/banking/savings/financial-security-0118/>

³ H2 Gambling Capital, 2018 <https://h2gc.com/>

half of this wealth – \$500 billion – will be lost to state lotteries. It's America's most-neglected problem today.

Building assets and the accumulating and investing of savings, are the keys to financial peace. A home, a college fund, retirement accounts, a stock portfolio—these assets are the hallmarks of middle and upper class America, and they are all the result of savings.

Creating wealth by the accumulation and investment of savings is the direct opposite of what state lotteries represent and encourage.

We strongly urge you to act now, before the assistance that American families will be receiving ends up being taken by state lottery tickets, rather than invested in immediate needs and churned through our economy for the benefit of everyone.

If you need any additional information about the urgency of shutting down state lottery gambling games, please call me at (202) 567-6996 or email me at Les@stoppredatorygambling.org. Thank you for your attention to this serious problem.

Sincerely,



Les Bernal
National Director
Stop Predatory Gambling