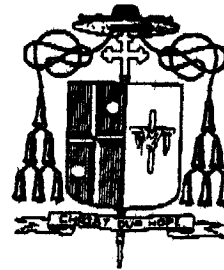


Diocese of Honolulu

Chancery Office • 1184 Bishop Street, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813-2858 • Phone (808) 533-1791 • Fax: (808) 537-1860



Office of the Bishop

STATEMENT ON GAMBLING BY THE MOST REVEREND FRANCIS X. DILORENZO BISHOP OF HONOLULU

February 28, 2001

As Catholic Bishop of Honolulu, I would like to express my opposition to the current efforts to permit casino gambling in the State of Hawaii.

The teaching of the Catholic Church on the morality of gambling is clear. People are entitled to dispose of their own property as they will, so long as in doing so they do not render themselves incapable of fulfilling duties expected by reason of justice or charity. Gambling, therefore, though a luxury is not considered morally wrong in itself, but it may become morally wrong when it interferes with one's other duties or responsibilities. Gambling itself, then, according to Catholic tradition, is morally neutral depending on the individual circumstances.

I speak here, not only out of a sense of my responsibility as a religious leader, but also out of my concern as a citizen of Hawaii for the long-range implications which these proposals will have for the quality of life of all of the citizens of our state. I have followed with interest, the development of casino and riverboat gambling in other parts of the United States. There is historical and anecdotal evidence that casino gambling is accompanied by vice and social evils. The impact of casino or riverboat gambling on low and moderate income families and individuals; on those for whom gambling becomes a compulsive behavior, on neighborhoods, housing patterns and the homeless, and on public morality in general are all concerns which must be considered.

I am well aware that some citizens of our State see in casino gambling, a means of competing with other tourist areas which have resorted to such means to promote tourism. We cannot believe that our State, which is so rich in natural beauty and wonderful climate needs to employ such doubtful means to promote tourism – especially in view of the potential harm to the common good of all citizens of our State.

I urge all responsible for making decisions in this matter to weigh carefully the reasons for opposing casino gambling which we have given here.

SIGNED: 
BISHOP OF HONOLULU