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**GRASSROOTS GROUP VOWS TO FIGHT "A-SLOT-MACHINE-IN-EVERY-NEIGHBORHOOD" BILL**

Protect Our Neighborhoods; a grassroots group headed up by local government leaders and activists from Commerce City, Centennial, Colorado Springs and Pueblo; is vowing to fight a measure they say would bring slot machine-style gambling to every Colorado neighborhood.

Protect Our Neighborhoods (PON) was formed in December 2009 to ensure that casino gaming including slot machines, video lottery/keno machines, instant racing machines, poker parlors and Native American casinos is not extended beyond the three mountain towns where it is currently allowed without a prior vote of the neighborhoods that will be impacted.

SCR10-004, introduced in the legislature yesterday, would require the Colorado Lottery to start up an electronic keno game, which PON contends is the same as slots. The measure does not say where those keno games will be located. The Colorado Lottery currently has 2800 retailers across the state that sell scratch and lotto tickets.

"Other states with keno gambling machines have allowed them to go into bars, restaurants, bowling alleys and racetracks," explained PON Secretary/Treasurer and Centennial Councilman Ron Weidmann. "The measure doesn't restrict the number of machines in any given location, doesn't let local residents decide if they want what could amount to a casino in their backyards and doesn't provide local government with any financial assistance to mitigate the impact of new gambling facilities."

Weidmann noted that Colorado voters overwhelmingly turned down a 2003 ballot measure, Amendment 33, which would have allowed video lottery terminals at five Colorado racetracks. "SCR4 is Amendment 33 on steroids," Weidmann said. "There's nothing in the measure to stop them from putting these games in every neighborhood, whether the neighborhood wants them or not. Since the lottery commission is charged with maximizing revenues from lottery games, they'd have to put keno in every neighborhood."

According to Weidmann, SCR10-004 is one of many stealth attempts to expand gaming in Colorado. "In the past they've tried to fool the public by calling these machines 'video lottery terminals' and 'instant racing games.' SCR4 refers to them as 'monitor lottery' games. Call them what you will, they're gambling machines."

He is also concerned that 18-year-olds will be allowed to play the games. Colorado's limited stakes gaming law prohibits anyone under the age of 21 from gambling in

one of the state's 39 mountain casinos, but SCR10-004 would make the video keno games part of the Colorado Lottery and the legal age for playing the lottery is 18.

In addition to Weidmann, PON's leadership includes Commerce City Councilwoman Kathy Teter, Arapahoe County Sheriff Grayson Robinson, El Paso County Commissioner Jim Bensberg, Aurora City Councilman Robert Broom, El Paso County Commissioner Dennis Hisey, Pueblo City Councilwoman Judy Weaver and Pueblo activist Hannah Rush.

More information about Protect Our Neighborhoods can be found at [www.protectourneighborhoods.org](http://www.protectourneighborhoods.org).

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