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BAY STATERS FLOCK TO FOXWOODS AND MOHEGAN SUN

**By gender, age, income and education,
residents make more than 6.9 million visits to Connecticut casinos**

Massachusetts residents made 6.9 million separate trips to Foxwoods and Mohegan Sun during the past 12 months, according to a behavioral survey released today by the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth Center for Policy Analysis.

The survey, part three of a seven-part study determining New England residents' attitudes toward casinos and slot parlors, found that Bay Staters, who comprise approximately 36% and 21% of Foxwoods and Mohegan Sun patrons, respectively, made about 6.9 million trips to the southeastern Connecticut casinos during the past twelve months. Approximately 83% of Massachusetts residents visiting Foxwoods and Mohegan Sun are 30 years and older.

Last week, the CFPA released a poll of 1,041 Massachusetts residents showing that 57% of Bay Staters support the authorization of a resort casino in the commonwealth, while 30% are opposed and 14% are undecided. Tomorrow, the CFPA will release a survey of Massachusetts residents and related demographics regarding their patronage of Lincoln Park and Newport Grand, Rhode Island's two video slot parlors.

The CFPA, which neither supports nor opposes gambling, studies gambling because of the increasingly significant public policy implications of gambling's fiscal, economic and social impacts throughout New England. Forty-eight states and the District of Columbia allow some form of gambling, with many states relying on gambling revenues as an essential part of the state budget.

Next week, the CFPA will release the fifth part of its seven-part behavioral survey examining the potential of gambling addiction, entitled "Is Gambling a Social Problem in New England?"

Overall, one-in-four Massachusetts residents surveyed --- approximately 25% --- reported visiting either Foxwoods or Mohegan Sun in the past 12 months, with men comprising 51% of the casinos' visitors, and women accounting for 49% of the visitors.

"Massachusetts residents' desire for casino gambling, and the recreational and entertainment amenities it offers, continues to increase each year," said Dr. Clyde W. Barrow, CFPA director. "It is clear that Massachusetts residents of all economic and educational backgrounds accept casino gambling as acceptable entertainment and will vigorously pursue that experience in Connecticut if denied the opportunity to do so in their home state, or unless offered a similar opportunity in nearby Rhode Island."

Of the four states surveyed --- Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Hampshire and Maine --- 63% of Bay Staters visiting Foxwoods and Mohegan Sun possessed at least some college experience, an associate's degree, a bachelor's degree, or post-graduate work. Specifically, 42% of Bay State residents patronizing the two casinos reported having a bachelor's degree or higher.

By income, 74% of Massachusetts residents visiting the two Connecticut casinos reported having annual incomes of \$45K or more, including 36% who had annual incomes of \$75K or more. Only 11% of Massachusetts residents visiting the casinos had incomes of \$25K or less.

Massachusetts residents also exhibited a higher propensity to spend more money on non-gambling amenities at the two casinos than any of the other states' residents.

Bay Staters surveyed had much higher rates of spending on food, lodging, retail and other entertainment at Foxwoods, and much higher rates of spending than any of the other states' residents on food and lodging at Mohegan Sun.

Barrow said many Massachusetts residents view their Foxwoods and Mohegan Sun visits as “mini-vacations,” resulting in more time spent at the casinos and in southeastern Connecticut.

“They’re spending more time in that region overnighting, attending a cabaret show or sporting event, shopping, and dining at restaurants,” Barrow said, “so they’re going to be making more non-gambling expenditures than their Connecticut counterparts.”

In early March, the CFPA will release its fourth annual New England Gaming Update, which tracks spending by residents of Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Hampshire, Maine, Vermont and New York at the Connecticut casinos, Rhode Island VLT parlors, and Bangor, Maine’s recently opened slot parlor. Last year’s study found that in 2005, Massachusetts residents spent approximately \$1.1 billion --- \$890.3 million and \$190.4 million,, respectively --- at the Connecticut casinos and Rhode Island VLT parlors. Rhode Islanders spent an estimated \$322.5 million at Foxwoods and Mohegan Sun.

Overall, the survey showed 83% of women and 51% of men reported that they primarily play slot machines. In fact, 60% of the slot machine players at Foxwoods and Mohegan Sun are women.

Persons aged 40-and-over are much more likely to play slot machines and, in general, the older the patron, the larger the percentage of persons who report that they primarily play the machines. The average slot machine player at Foxwoods and Mohegan Sun is a woman aged 40-plus, with at least some college, and an annual income of \$25K-to-\$75K per year.

Overall, 65% of slot machine players at the two casinos have annual incomes of \$45K or more. In addition to gambling, these players are likely to spend money on food, lodging and retail.

Conversely, 35% of men reported that they primarily play table games at Foxwoods and Mohegan Sun, and 83% of all table game players at the two casinos are men. The average table game player at Foxwoods and Mohegan Sun is a male under age-40, with at least some college, and earning \$75K or more a year.

Overall, 81% of table games players have annual incomes of \$45K or more, while 56% of table games players have annual incomes of \$75K or higher. In addition to gambling, these players are likely to spend money on food, lodging, golf and patronizing the casinos’ entertainment venues.

Nearly 60% of Foxwoods’ high-stakes bingo players are women, and the average high-stakes bingo player at Foxwoods is a young woman aged 21-29, with some college, and earning between \$25K-\$45K annually. In addition to gambling, these players are likely to spend money on food and entertainment.

Both men and women visitors to Foxwoods and Mohegan Sun rated the casinos’ general atmosphere and physical attractiveness, slots machines, table games, bars and restaurants, geographic proximity to their homes, and concerts and other entertainment as amenities important to them.

At the same time, 80% of those surveyed reported traveling more than 60 minutes to visit either casino, underscoring that, for the vast majority of casino patrons, gambling on slot machines alone is not the sole reason they patronize Foxwoods and Mohegan Sun.

In fact, 77% of those who visited the casinos said they had not visited Lincoln Park or Newport Grand. This is despite the fact that both Rhode Island facilities are closer to the vast preponderance of Bay Staters who gamble, and who reside in Greater Boston and eastern Massachusetts.

“Massachusetts residents comprehend the differences between destination casinos such as Foxwoods and Mohegan Sun, and convenience gambling facilities, such as Lincoln Park and Newport Grand,” Barrow added. “And that difference is clearly accentuated when Massachusetts residents prefer to drive an extra hour each way to patronize a destination casino in southeastern Connecticut rather than a more conveniently located VLT parlor in Rhode Island.”

For a summary of today’s survey results, go to “What’s New!” at <http://www.umassd.edu/cfpa>. The summary will be posted on Sunday, February 4th, at 5pm.