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**February 5, 2007/5:00am**

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**OCEAN STATERS FLOCK TO FOXWOODS AND MOHEGAN SUN**

**By gender, age, income and education,  
residents make 1.7 million visits to Connecticut casinos**

Rhode Island residents made 1.7 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, interviewed 1,097 Rhode Island residents. The survey found that Ocean Staters, who comprise approximately 16% and 8% of Foxwoods and Mohegan Sun patrons, respectively, made 1.7 million trips to the southeastern Connecticut casinos during the past twelve months. Approximately 73% of Rhode Island residents visiting Foxwoods and Mohegan Sun are 30 years-of-age and older.

Tomorrow, the CFPA will release a survey of Massachusetts residents and related demographics regarding Bay Staters and Ocean Staters' patronage of Lincoln Park and Newport Grand, Rhode Island's two video slot parlors.

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. That same survey found 53% of Bay Staters also approved of authorizing slot machines at the state's four racetracks, 29% were opposed, and 18% were undecided. Two of the state's four racetracks are located in southeastern Massachusetts, minutes from the Rhode Island border.

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. 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. In Rhode Island, gambling revenues are the third-largest contributor to 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, more than one-in-three Rhode Island residents surveyed --- nearly 35% --- reported visiting either Foxwoods or Mohegan Sun in the past 12 months, the highest ratio of visitations by residents of the four states surveyed (Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Maine). Rhode Island visitations to the two casinos were divided equally between men and women.

"Per capita, Rhode Islanders, even more than Massachusetts residents, overwhelmingly prefer visiting Foxwoods and Mohegan Sun for casino gambling and the recreational and entertainment amenities the two casinos offer," said Dr. Clyde W. Barrow, CFPA director. "Rhode Islanders of all ages, economic and educational backgrounds view 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 a similar opportunity is offered in nearby Massachusetts."

Of the four states surveyed --- Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Hampshire and Maine --- 64% of Ocean 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, one of every three Rhode Islanders patronizing the two casinos --- some 33% --- reported having a bachelor's degree or higher.

By income, 70% of Rhode Island residents visiting the two Connecticut casinos reported having annual incomes of \$45,000 or more, including 41% who had annual incomes of \$75,000 or more. Only 13% of Rhode Island residents visiting the casinos had incomes of \$25,000 or less.

Ocean Staters also exhibited a propensity to spend more money on non-gambling expenditures at the two casinos. Barrow said many Rhode Island 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.”

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 2006 Rhode Islanders spent an estimated \$322.5 million at Foxwoods and Mohegan Sun. Massachusetts residents spent approximately \$1.1 billion --- \$890.3 million and \$190.4 million,, respectively --- at the Connecticut casinos and Rhode Island VLT parlors.

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 \$25,000-to-\$75,000 per year.

Overall, 65% of slot machine players at the two casinos have annual incomes of \$45,000 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 \$75,000 or more a year.

Overall, 81% of table games players have annual incomes of \$45,000 or more, while 56% of table games players have annual incomes of \$75,000 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 \$25,000 - \$45,000 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.

About 80% reported traveling 60 minutes or more to visit the casinos, underscoring that, for the majority of patrons, gambling on slot machines is not the sole reason they patronize Foxwoods and Mohegan Sun.

In fact, 77% who visited the casinos said they had not visited Lincoln Park or Newport Grand. That despite both Rhode Island facilities being closer to the vast preponderance of Rhode Islanders and Bay Staters residing in the greater Providence, metropolitan Boston and southeastern Massachusetts regions.

“Rhode Islanders 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 Rhode Island 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 their home state.”

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 4<sup>th</sup>, at 5pm.