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The MGC Presents Social and Economic Impact Data for First Two-Years of Operations at Plainridge Park Casino

Preliminary research released on the third anniversary of state's first expanded gaming facility

The Massachusetts Gaming Commission (MGC) recently presented an in-depth report about the overall economic and social impacts of Plainridge Park Casino (PPC) on its host and surrounding communities. The data was introduced on June 26, 2018, by MGC Chairman Steve Crosby during a public meeting at the Senior Center in Plainville, Mass. The information consists of a comprehensive review of PPC's first two years of operations and covers topics such as unemployment, crime, fiscal impacts from taxes, and problem gambling rates. This summer marks the third anniversary of PPC's opening.

The preliminary research findings are based on a five-year study of the economic and social impacts of Plainridge Park in the host community of Plainville and the surrounding towns of Attleborough, Foxborough, Mansfield, North Attleborough, and Wrentham. This study, funded and overseen by the MGC, is part of a larger legislatively mandated research agenda to study the effects of expanded gaming in Massachusetts.

"For the first time, perhaps in the history of casinos, regulators and legislators have fact-based evidence by academic-quality researchers, of the true costs and benefits of introducing casinos in a new jurisdiction. This report will be the first of many over the coming years of the detailed economic and social impacts of casinos on host communities, their surrounding communities, and the Commonwealth as a whole," said Chairman Crosby.

In 2013, the Commission engaged a team at the University of Massachusetts Amherst to conduct a comprehensive, multi-year study of the Social and Economic Impacts of Gambling in Massachusetts ([SEIGMA](#)) to understand the impacts of expanded gaming in the state. The study established baselines for all social and economic variables that may be affected by expanded gaming. The research team continues to collect, analyze and report each year so that lawmakers, regulators and business leaders will be able to use the SEIGMA findings to help develop state policies for the casino gambling industry.

Analysis of social impacts:

- **Problem Gambling:** No significant changes in problem gambling have occurred in the host or surrounding communities after the opening of PPC.
 - No significant change in the percentage of regular gamblers reporting negative impacts due to gambling such as financial problems, bankruptcy, divorce, health problems and mental stress.



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- No reported change in the number of Gamblers Anonymous meetings in Plainville or the number of people who attend them.
- **Public Safety:** No significant impacts on public safety have been identified as attributable to PPC. There was a temporary increase in credit card fraud as well as increased reports in suspicious activity and lost property which is likely attributable to PPC.
- **Attitudes:** There is evidence of a significant change in attitudes toward gambling in the host and surrounding communities.
 - A decrease in the percentage of people who think gambling is not available enough (27%-12%) and increase in the proportion who believes current availability is fine (61%-74%)
 - A decrease in the percentage of people who think that casinos are beneficial to Massachusetts (44%-33%) and increase in the proportion who believe they are neither beneficial or harmful (22%-32%)
- **Population Health:** There is no evidence of any change in population health.
- **Demographics:** There is no evidence that any differences in population or demographic characteristics are due to PPC.
 - Plainville's population has increased faster than any other area of the state, but this trend was evident for several years before the opening of PPC.
- **Environment:** There is some evidence of environmental impacts from PPC.
 - There were increased noise complaints in Plainville associated with PPC construction, but not its operation.
 - Plainville has experienced increased traffic volume and complaints since PPC's opening.

Analysis of economic impacts:

- **Construction Expenditure: \$150.2 Million** spent by Penn National to build PPC, with **86.7%** spent within Massachusetts.
 - **554** people on construction payroll, with **81.4%** from Massachusetts.
- **Revenue:** Total operating revenue for PPC from 2015-2017 is approximately **\$466 Million**.
 - **\$4 Million** spent by patrons in 2016 on food, retail, shopping and other amenities in the local area as part of their visit to PPC.
 - PPC patron survey indicates the most significant source of revenue is recaptured from Mass residents who would have gambled out of state, if not for PPC. **58%** or **\$100 Million** of revenue was repatriated spending.
- **Operational Expenses: \$129.5 Million** incurred in operational expenses in PPC's first year, with **80.7%** spent in Mass.
- **Operational Employment:** PPC employee survey finds a significant portion of jobs are "new" jobs as **15.5%** of people were unemployed and **34.7%** were employed part-time before being hired. PPC employs approximately **500** people.



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- **Business Establishments:** In Plainville, PPC has increased lottery sales, stabilized PPC horse racing revenue, and may have contributed to an increase in the overall number of business establishments.
- **Host Community Employment:** There is evidence of an increase in employment numbers in the town of Plainville partly attributable to PPC.
- **Personal Income:** It is possible that the slight increase in wages and a slight decrease in the poverty rate in Plainville are due to PPC.

"It is evident that the economic benefits that were hoped for by the town of Plainville have come to pass," said SEIGMA researcher **Rachel Volberg**. "The goals of the expanded gaming act were for job creation, economic development and the recapture of gambling money leaving the state and we have seen all of those come to fruition in Plainville."

MGC Chairman Steve Crosby said, "The building and operation of Plainridge Park Casino has had virtually no social impacts and several clear positive economic impacts at both a statewide and regional level."

In addition to the researchers from UMass Amherst, the [UMass Donahue Institute](#) contributed to this study and is a member of the SEIGMA project team.

View the [presentation](#).

About MassGaming

The mission of the Massachusetts Gaming Commission is to create a fair, transparent, and participatory process for implementing the expanded gaming law passed by the Legislature and signed by the Governor in November 2011. In creating that process, the Commission will strive to ensure that its decision-making and regulatory systems engender the confidence of the public and participants, and that they provide the greatest possible economic development benefits and revenues to the people of the Commonwealth, reduce to the maximum extent possible the potentially negative or unintended consequences of the new legislation, and allow an appropriate return on investment for gaming providers that assures the operation of casino-resorts of the highest quality. For more information on MGC, please visit [MassGaming.com](#) or connect and share on Twitter (@MassGamingComm) or Facebook [www.facebook.com/MAGamingComm](#).



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