



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DIVISION OF SPECIAL REVENUE

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POKER TOURNAMENTS

In response to numerous inquiries, the State Division of Special Revenue, which regulates legalized gambling, issued a statement today, clarifying the fact that the hosting of poker games or tournaments at commercial bars would be a clear violation of the State's criminal statutes and a violation of the Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) between the Mashantucket Pequot and Mohegan Tribes and the State.

According to Division spokesman, Paul Bernstein, the General Assembly repealed the Games of Chance Act allowing Las Vegas night games during the January 6, 2003 Special Session. "This Act," according to Bernstein, "also specifically added poker amongst other games, as a form of gambling prohibited in Connecticut." "Additionally", said Bernstein, "Sec. 53-278b of the statutes provides that anyone who engages in gambling, or solicits or induces another to engage in gambling, or is present when another person or persons are engaged in gambling, shall be guilty of a Class B misdemeanor. Therefore, poker is a prohibited form of gambling and soliciting others to partake in a form of prohibited gambling is also a violation of the State's criminal statutes."

"Secondly", said Bernstein, "The MOUs provide the Mashantucket Pequots and the Mohegans the exclusive right to operate "commercial casino games" and the State receives 25% of slot revenue for allowing this exclusive right. Because poker is one of the commercial casino games listed in the Tribal Agreements, the State would be violating the MOUs if it allowed anyone else in the State to engage in or solicit others to engage in poker."

Bernstein said that the Division was hopeful this information would be helpful to those businesses which may be contemplating the conduct of poker games or tournaments.
