



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DIVISION OF SPECIAL REVENUE

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Poker, Internet Wagering Illegal

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 by persons, firms or organizations would be a violation of the State's criminal statutes and a violation of the Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs) between the Mashantucket Pequot and Mohegan Tribes and the State.

According to Paul A. Young, Executive Director of the Division, his agency receives numerous telephone calls and e-mails from people inquiring as to the legality of their hosting or conducting poker games or tournaments. Said Young, "Sec. 53-278a of the general statutes includes poker as a casino gambling game that is illegal, and Sec. 53-278b provides that anyone who engages in such gambling, or solicits or induces another to engage in such gambling, or is present when another person or persons are engaged in such gambling, shall be guilty of a Class B misdemeanor. Poker is clearly a prohibited form of gambling and soliciting others to partake in a form of prohibited gambling is a violation of the State's criminal statutes. We also have the Tribal agreements to consider."

"The Division of Special Revenue is responsible for ensuring the integrity of legalized gambling, but I believe we have a responsibility to educate the public about gambling which is illegal," said Young.

"Wagering on the Internet is another issue of concern. The opportunity to wager over the Internet on a variety of activities, including casino games, is very attractive to many people; however, such activity is illegal in Connecticut. It is not an activity which has been authorized by law, and there are no statutory or regulatory provisions in place to safeguard the public. Those who would wager on the Internet would be acting illegally, and would do so at their own risk, as they would not be dealing with entities subject to government oversight."
