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## 'There will be another John Neal' State Rep. Dennis Tyler says video gambling legalization would help t

By **SETH SLABAUGH**  
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MUNCIE -- The state's seizure of more than 20 taverns allegedly controlled by John Neal "put a lot of good people out of work that didn't have a thing to do with gambling," says state Rep. Dennis Tyler, D-Muncie.

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He was referring to employees such as cooks, servers and custodians.

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Which is one of the reasons Tyler might back the efforts of Indiana's tavern owners, American Legions and others to again attempt to legalize video gambling in Hoosier bars.

"We don't want to see that happen any more," Tyler said of the raids, searches and seizures Monday of Neal's establishments by state excise police, the Madison County

prosecutor, Anderson police and other law enforcement agents. "We have enough problems with a shrinking work force."

Tyler is convinced that the prosecution of Neal on allegations of racketeering activity, promoting professional gambling and money laundering will not stop video gambling in Indiana.

"If John Neal goes away, there will be another John Neal," the representative said.

The Indiana Licensed Beverage Association, representing tavern owners, is conducting meetings this month at American Legions, Amvets, VFWs and Moose and Eagles lodges throughout the state to generate support for video gambling in bars.

"We're making a lot of waves," ILBA executive director Brad Klopfenstein said. "But the (general) election will make a big difference in how things look for us. If the House goes Democratic, that probably bodes a little better for us."

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Republican state Rep. Marlin Stutzman, a farmer from LaGrange County and chairman of the House Public Policy and Veterans Affairs Committee, opposes the expansion of gambling and has said he would not likely hear any bill legalizing video gambling.

ILBA advocates the three R's: Reduce, Restrict and Regulate.

The trade association wants to *reduce* the number of video gambling machines, which are spreading from taverns to gas stations, truck stops, laundries, delis, used-car lots and even bait shops; *restrict* access to players age 21 and over in bars; and *regulate* the machines so players receive a fair payout and the state receives tax revenue from them.

"The revenue stream is what everybody's talking about," Tyler said.

A video gambling wagering tax would generate an estimated \$300 million a year for state and local government, according to Klopfenstein.

That money could be used to help pay state expenses for initiatives such as all-day kindergarten, Tyler said. The revenue is also needed to help locally owned bars and service clubs survive, he added.

"I'd sure hate to see the people who work in those establishments lose their jobs," Tyler said.

(Investigators claim Neal's taverns were mini-casinos only nominally involved in the restaurant and tavern business.)

State Rep. Tiny Adams, D-Muncie, introduced legislation to legalize video gambling in 2004 and was planning to do the same in the 2006 session, but he died before the session began.

State Rep. Win Moses, D-Fort Wayne, "a highly respected legislator on our side," will sponsor video gambling legislation in the 2007 session of the General Assembly, Tyler said. "He's working on it with Sen. Meeks, a financial guru for the Republicans."

A former state trooper, Robert Meeks, of LaGrange, said: "I'm a proponent of controlling it, taxing it and keeping it out of the reach of kids. We need to get it out of the dark. Right now it's run by the Mafia you could say, so you're going to have corruption. "

**Contact news reporter Seth Slabaugh at 213-5834.**

**STORYCHAT** 

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well beastieboy if you would go back and read I said he has the right idea BUT DOES THAT MEAN HE NEEDS TO BE ELECTED. Talking about being for getting more jobs. NEVER SAID I WANTED HIM ELECTED. WE DO NEED DEMOCRATS IN OFFICE BUT I NEVER SAID HE NEED TO BE THERE. SO JUST READ BEFORE YOU OPEN YOUR MOUTH.

Posted: Thu Sep 21, 2006 6:57 am

Angie and Lovejoy- you two need to get your heads out of the sand. The only thing we need Dennis Tyler to do is get out of politics! I'm sure you guys or someone in your family has a job because of "good ole' boy" politician' but those days are gone. And gone with them is the "Democrat Machine" in Delaware County. The Machine is dead- deal with it! Men like Tyler are the problem, not the solution. And if you are in his corner that also makes you part of problem.

Posted: Thu Sep 21, 2006 2:32 am

If there is that much money being made why cant the state reps make it legal and get the taxes from it and get rid of these nursing homes and make them all assisted living and get the help that the old people need. You can go into any of them and they are all under staffed at any given time. This would do a great thing for the older people and then they would not have to thank they were in prison all of the time and still could have there own little home. They have to share a motel room with someone and cant never have any private time by themselves unless they go to a lobby. Come on people Its time that our elders are being taken care of since they are the ones that made sure we have what we have today. They just forget all about them old folks when they all become non productive anymore. People better wake up you all will be there sooner then you think and then you will be setting around all day in a wheel chair and not have anything to talk about.

Posted: Wed Sep 20, 2006 6:05 pm

we need jobs, job, job, who care's about the poker. 🐱

Posted: Wed Sep 20, 2006 5:51 pm

granted he has the right thought about making it legal but is that the only reason he should be elected.

Posted: Wed Sep 20, 2006 1:59 pm

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