

Gambling Limits Do Not Last

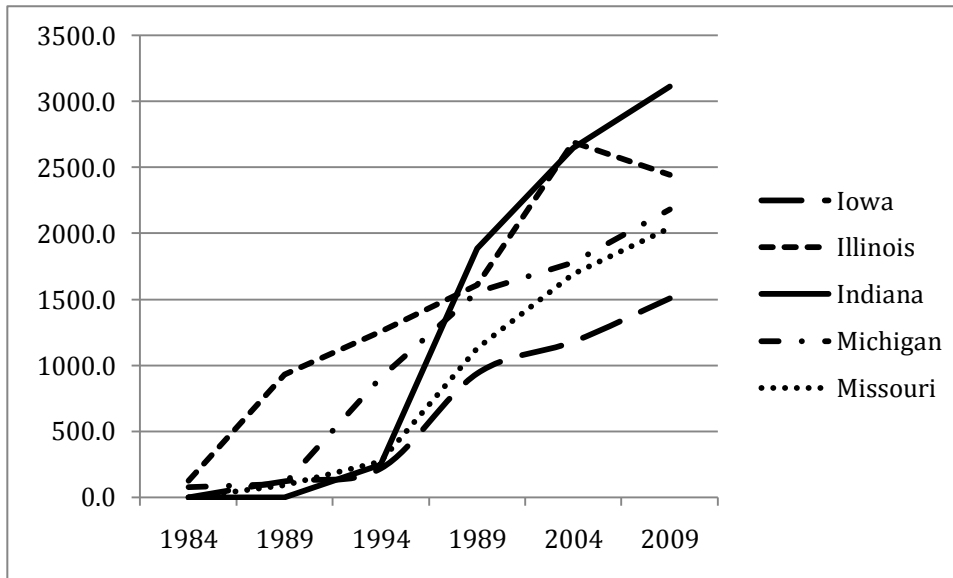
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Promoted with nostalgic visions of old-time small-stakes riverboat gambling, Iowa opened the door to America’s two-decade gambling binge by launching four gambling boats in 1991. In Iowa, as elsewhere, gambling limits quickly disappeared in a race to the bottom with neighboring states wanting in on the action. By 1994, Iowa betting ceilings had been removed, cruising requirements were relaxed, and land-based slot machine locations were legalized.

Today, Iowa’s regulatory body oversees twenty casinos across the state and invites gambling operators to research “underserved markets.” Impact studies that showed an explosion in Iowan gambling addiction problems from 1.7% of the population in 1989 to 5.4% in 1995 have been quietly shelved and not repeated. From 1994 to 2009 Iowa gambler losses jumped by more than 600 percent. Electronic Gambling Machines (EGMs) accounted for 80 percent of this amount.

Stop Predatory Gambling has collected data from Iowa and four other states to illustrate that gambling expansion does not end on initial approval. The chart below shows the net amount lost by gamblers over time from five states that have legalized slot machines and casinos: Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, and Missouri. The trend is clear. Once legalized, the gambling industry successfully pushes past initial limits to expand its reach into citizens’ wallets.

Learn more at www.StopPredatoryGambling.org.



Net Gambler Losses (in millions)

	1984	1989	1994	1989	2004	2009
Iowa	-	122	220	937	1,178	1,505
Illinois	123	931	1,256	1,610	2,691	2,446
Indiana	-	-	247	1,887	2,650	3,112
Michigan	78	100	904	1,555	1,780	2,179
Missouri	-	92	272	1,129	1,691	2,043