



PRESS RELEASE

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Family Council Action Committee Notifying Stores of Lottery Ticket Vending Machine Concerns

Today, Family Council Action Committee President Jerry Cox mailed letters to Arkansas' Dollar General, Family Dollar, Fred's Discount, and Walgreens stores. In the letter, he outlined some concerns his group and others have expressed about lottery ticket vending machines.

Cox said, "All we want to do is make sure that store owners get the whole story on these vending machines. The machines are very controversial, and Arkansas' store owners need to know that."

Cox went on to say, "Over 1,220 Arkansans sent comments to the Arkansas Lottery Commission saying 'we don't want these machines.' Comments against the machines came from 69 of Arkansas' 75 counties. That means if you're a store owner in Arkansas, chances are good that someone in your community doesn't like the machines.

I firmly believe that some store owners are going to lose customers if these machines pop up in their stores. They are that unpopular."

Cox said there were reasons to be concerned about the vending machines besides their widespread criticism. "Machines like these will lead to illegal, underage gambling. In other states, it's not uncommon for people to loiter around lottery machines for extended periods of time, buying lottery ticket after lottery ticket. The Arkansas Lottery Commission evidently expects the same to be true here in Arkansas—otherwise they would not have authorized the 'continuous play' feature on these vending machines. If I were a store owner, I wouldn't want people loitering around a vending machine. I would want them buying merchandise."

Cox also said store owners need to be aware of the possibility that these machines could be outlawed when the legislature convenes in January. "The tide of public opinion is turning against the Lottery Commission and these machines. I firmly expect legislation to be passed in 2011 that will rein in the Lottery Commission, and I believe banning these machines will be part of that legislation. These machines are already illegal in South Carolina and several other states. If I were in the store owner's position, I would at least want to wait and see what our legislators do before making a decision. It's just common sense."

Cox said in all about 420 letters had been mailed to stores across Arkansas. "We went to Google, and we found every Fred's, Dollar General, Family Dollar, and Walgreens we could. Most of them should get their letters by Friday or Saturday. My hope is that the letters will help raise awareness about how controversial these vending machines really are."

Attachment: A Copy of the letter sent to stores.

Family Council Action Committee is a conservative 501(c)(4) organization based in Little Rock, Arkansas.

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