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## **House votes to shut down internet gambling cafés**

TALLAHASSEE – Today the Florida House of Representatives overwhelmingly passed a bill to close a loophole in Florida’s sweepstakes laws that is being exploited to run unauthorized internet gambling cafés. House Bill 3, sponsored by Representative Scott Plakon, would shut down these predatory gambling houses, which even those in the business of operating them admit, prey on the poor and the elderly.

“We applaud Rep. Plakon and the Florida House for seeing internet gambling cafés for what they are - unauthorized gambling houses that have never been sanctioned by the Legislature or the voters of Florida,” said No Casinos President John Sowinski. “We urge the Senate to take up HB 3 and pass it so that Floridians can be protected from these shady internet gambling cafés”.

The Senate’s own version of Plakon’s bill regulates these gambling parlors instead of shutting them down altogether as HB 3 does. No Casinos, who opposes the expansion of gambling in Florida believes regulating internet cafes instead of shutting them down grants amnesty to those who have chosen to operate in a legal grey area and could also provide legislative authorization to these operations that would likely violate the Seminole Compact, costing the state hundreds of millions of tax dollars every year.

“If legislators are serious about controlling gambling in our state, the best place to start is closing down internet gambling cafés,” added Sowinski.

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