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House bill to stop internet gambling cafés is a world apart from Senate bill's colossal gambling expansion

TALLAHASSEE – In the wake of last week's Senate Committee vote in support of CS/SB 710 allowing for the largest expansion of gambling in Florida history, the House Business & Consumer Affairs Subcommittee passed a bill today that would close a loophole on unauthorized gambling in Florida. HB 3 sponsored by Representative Scott Plakon, would reign in so-called "internet cafés".

"Sponsors of the gambling expansion bill (CS/SB 710) that was in Senate committee last week have for months said that they want to create a strategic direction for gambling in our state – yet what they really provide is amnesty for 1,500 illegal internet cafes. The most logical strategic direction is to stop unauthorized gambling – like the house subcommittee voted to do today," said No Casinos President John Sowinski.

No Casinos opposes the expansion of gambling in Florida. For months the sponsors of legislation to expand gambling have attempted to characterize their efforts as a "reduction" in gambling. Last week in committee their true intentions – to expand virtually every form of gambling in the state – were unmasked. Representative Plakon's bill to reduce gambling throughout Florida – and shut down illegal internet cafes once and for all is a welcome contrast to CS/SB 710, which would expand gambling in communities throughout the state.