

LEGALIZED LOTTERIES

By JOHN KENT

WHEN GOV. JOHN W. KING of New Hampshire signed into law a controversial state sweepstakes bill last spring, he expected a lot of pro and con letters. He wasn't disappointed.

One New Hampshire woman wrote King that she was "stunned and sickened" that the Granite State had resorted to gambling to educate its children, and she prayed that the governor would "see the errors of his ways."

But in the same mail came a letter from the woman's husband. He thought the sweepstakes law was a great idea and lauded King for signing it against heavy opposition. Then he added a postscript: "Governor, don't answer this letter."

The division of this couple reflects the sharply divided opinion throughout the country over the wisdom of a government body raising needed revenue through lotteries instead of increasing already-burdensome taxes. Since New Hampshire approved a sweeps, almost every state has heard the cry: "Let's do the same." Already three neighboring states have considered the feasibility of setting up lotteries of their own.

You won't be able to buy a New Hampshire sweeps ticket at least until next spring because voters first must ballot on whether they want tickets sold in their own locality. It will be the first indication on a statewide basis of how the individual New Hampshireman feels about a lottery.

If you were voting, how would you cast your ballot? It is a question that may be raised in your state soon. Would you be in favor of a state-sponsored lottery to raise money if you knew defeat of the measure would mean new or added taxes for you? Before you vote in the FAMILY WEEKLY poll presented on this page, let's review the history of the New Hampshire sweepstakes and the pro and con arguments advanced during the legislative debate there last spring.

New Hampshire has a \$94-million budget—but no state income tax or sales tax. Most of its revenue, \$26 million, comes from levies on liquor, tobacco, and horse racing. Schools are supported almost entirely by local property taxes and are in desperate need of more state aid.

Sweepstakes proponents claim they can raise at least \$4 million a year for education by selling sweeps tickets for no more than \$3 apiece on prizes which would total \$200,000. The winners would be determined by two horse races run in New Hampshire each year.

NOW HERE ARE the pros and cons: First, New Hampshire educators see the lottery as no boon to education but only as a way to dodge an income tax. Franklin Hollis, chairman of the board of education, says that New Hampshire schools need \$20 million, not a possible \$4 million, and that a lottery is just a "stopgap measure."

Governor King replies that there is no other way to raise money since a progressive income tax is unconstitutional in New Hampshire and that educational needs are so critical it

SPECIAL FAMILY WEEKLY POLL

Are You in Favor of Legalized Lotteries?

Because of the great interest in the question of a state-operated lottery, both from a moral standpoint and from its possible value in reducing or avoiding added taxes for the individual citizen, FAMILY WEEKLY is conducting this nationwide poll on the subject. The results will be published in a forthcoming issue of FAMILY WEEKLY. Please cast your vote and express your reasons for or against (this is optional; your vote will be recorded even if you choose not to fill out the Comments section).

BALLOT

As an alternative to increased local or state taxes, a state-operated lottery would be justified. Yes ☐ No ☐

Comments (100 Words or Less)

I (am) (am not) in favor of a legalized lottery because _____

Mail to: Poll, Family Weekly, 60 E. 56th St., New York 22, N. Y.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Zone _____ State _____

You may publish my remarks and use my name ☐

You may publish my remarks but don't use my name ☐

