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BREAKING NEWS
 PUBLISHED: 01-16-07 3:31 PM EST

Lawmaker pulls proposal to legalize, regulate video gambling

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

INDIANAPOLIS - A lawmaker who supports efforts to legalize and regulate video gambling machines in taverns and bars said Tuesday that he will not push for the legislation this year.

Rep. Win Moses, D-Fort Wayne, said regulating and taxing the state's 20,000 to 30,000 illegal video gambling machines, sometimes called "Cherry Masters," could bring the state \$200 million in revenue.

The Indiana Licensed Beverage Association has tried to drum up support to legalize the machines. But there was not enough consensus among lawmakers and others on the bill, Moses said, so he wants to send the issue to a legislative study committee instead.

"I don't have a majority of people who say they think that this is a good idea," Moses said. "I have people who are quite willing to listen, and I have many more than that who are willing to tell me how to spend the money. But I have no consensus."

House Speaker Pat Bauer, D-South Bend, has called legalization of video poker machines a "long shot" for passing the Legislature this session.

"They would be virtually everywhere, on every city block, and that is a huge problem that I don't think people fully understand," Bauer said last week. "You triple the gambling you already have."

Others say something needs to be done this year to stop the spread of the illegal machines.

Senate President Pro Tem David Long, R-Fort Wayne, said the state should either step up enforcement to eliminate the machines or regulate and tax them.

Although Moses said he will not push his video gambling bill, no proposal is truly dead until the legislative session ends without it passing.

"In the Legislature, anything can happen," Moses said.

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