Email to Emily, send to derek

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… Believe it or not, there are many strong arguments supporting the legalization of sports betting and other gambling throughout the United States. One of the strongest is to bring it into the public eye and out of the fringes of society that it was in the mid 20th century. I agree with this to an extent. I feel an adult should be able to place a bet and have some fun if they desire, so doing it in an established casino or on a legitimate website is much better than having to find an under the table bookie. I do not want to sound like a hypocrite telling of the dangers of betting, because if it hasn’t become clear by now, I too enjoy placing bets now and then. I am thankful that I can now do this in a legal manner, and I don’t have to risk getting in legal trouble for placing a bet thanks to the legalization movement that has been going on throughout the country. This argument is similar to that of legalizing marijuana. People are going to find a way to do it whether it’s legal or not, so maybe the government should make this as safe as possible.

Another similarity that legalizing gambling has to legalizing marijuana is that it can generate billions (yes, actually billions) of dollars in tax revenue every year for a state. In January of this year, legalized mobile sports betting launched in the state of New York. The New York Post reported that in the first month alone, this mobile sports betting generated nearly $2 billion in wagers, resulting in $70 million in state tax revenues. This was during just the first thirty days that mobile sports betting apps were launched in New York, and it is likely that they will generate more than a billion dollars in tax revenue for the state this year. Connecticut, Rhode Island, and New Hampshire also have passed similar laws in recent years, meaning that 4 of the 5 states bordering Massachusetts have legalized sports gambling. No matter where you live in the state, it is likely you can take a short drive to one of these states and place a legal sports bet at a casino or using a mobile app. These apps do track your location, so they will not allow you to bet within a state that does not have legalized mobile sports betting. Since Massachusetts is slightly behind the curve on this matter, they have missed out on billions of dollars in tax revenue that simply have been benefitting neighboring states. Just this summer, legislation was passed in the state to legalize sports betting both in casinos and on mobile apps, and it is projected that early next year is when these apps and sportsbooks will launch in the state.

It is almost as if Massachusetts was pushed to legalize sports betting by neighboring states benefitting off the tax revenue their residents produced. This domino effect of states essentially not wanting to miss out on tax dollars all started in June of 2018 when the Supreme Court declared a 1992 act illegal, according to USA Today. This act was known as PASPA, standing for the Pro and Amateur Sports Protection Act, and it had taken a harder stance making sports betting illegal throughout the country. The Supreme Court’s decision in 2018 now left it to states to determine their own laws around sports betting, as they had with other forms of gambling in general in the past. In the 4 years since then, 30 of the 50 states have legalized sports betting, with many more expected to follow suit in coming years (Forbes).

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