The Ohio Lottery And The Problems It Produces Essay, Research Paper

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In August 1974 the first ticket for the Buckeye 300 was sold. This was a big year for the state of Ohio. It marked the start of something that would grow into a resemblance of the garden of good and evil. Though lottery is a big moneymaker for the state, it is also a cause of a horrible addiction.

Senator Ron Mottl first campaigned against the idea of the Lottery in Ohio. Its approval in Ohio was apparent; the State Issue 1 passed by more than a 2-1 margin. And the lottery was off to a start, leaving morals and concern behind.

At first a five-member board governed the Lottery, although now that has been expanded to nine. The Lottery was not required to donate money for educational purposes until the spring of 1987, although it had the choice to since 1983. Now the revenues of the lottery have a regulated payment plan: 56.76% Prize Awards; 33.01% Educational purposes; 3.94% Operating expense; 6.29 % Bonuses/Commissions.

The Ohio Lottery has contributed over $9 billion dollars to education since it?s beginning in 1974. Although this seems to be a large amount of money, the truth is Ohio has more than 600 school districts that they must donate money to. When you get right down to it, the Lottery may not be worth using as a moneymaker for schools. This is especially apparent when you look at all the harm it can do, take one man?s personal experience for example:

Last February, Jack hit the jackpot.

It was the unluckiest thing that ever happened to him. His $1 million bonanza fed an addiction to instant games that had cost him $600,000 since 1989. He had to be hospitalized and it drove him into bankruptcy.

The retired systems analyst from Everett soon scratched away the first year?s $50,000 installment from his windfall-plus another $20,000 borrowed from his friends. Now he?s trying to tie up the rest of his million in a trust fund before he squanders it all.

Lottery addictions are becoming more and more common. ?Today, scratch tickets are the worst. They?re immediate and they?re everywhere. You can?t buy a jug of milk or a can of tuna fish without seeing lottery tickets,? says Thomas N. Cummings, executive director of the Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling. Although there is no recent study done on lottery addictions, computers show that more than one-third of the major winners are habitual players.

An even more terrible thought, no one seems to be alarmed. Even though the lotteries’ revenues add up to more than $3 billion annually, not even $500,000 goes into outreach programs. This was all right in earlier years when the lottery was not so habit-forming. Why? In the beginning the lottery only had a once-a-week drawing. Then instant ticket came along and the public was hooked.

The lottery is not all ?evil? though; they have many accomplishments just as other legit corporations do. The lottery has done well in trying to lower their operating expenses. In ?98 it was the lowest that it has ever been, 3.94 %. Also, last year, the lottery ended up transferring a total of $723.8 million for educational purposes. Last, but not least, sales of lottery tickets in ?98 were the third highest that they have ever been.

In conclusion, the Ohio lottery is one of the most successful lotteries in the U.S. But, when the number of sales go up, so do the number of addicted gamblers. Many of these addicted gamblers never get help which helps the numbers keep rising. The lottery may be a great source of income for many schools, but it is not worth the pain and heartache it causes.