

## Massachusetts Residents Have Mixed Opinions on Gambling Expansion in Massachusetts Prior to Casinos

The Massachusetts Legislature passed an Act Establishing Expanded Gaming in the Commonwealth in November 2011. This permits the introduction of casinos and slot parlors in Massachusetts for the first time. Prior to the establishment of casinos, the SEIGMA team took a “snapshot” of how Massachusetts residents felt about gambling. Here, we summarize findings from SEIGMA’s *Gambling and Problem Gambling in Massachusetts: Results of a Baseline Population Survey*, based on responses from approximately 10,000 Massachusetts adults in 2013 / 2014 before casinos were open.

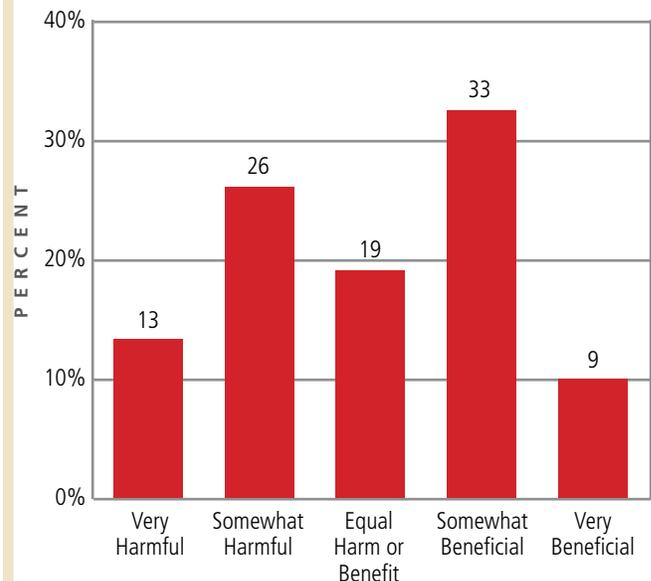
### Massachusetts residents have a range of opinions on gambling:

- Over half of the population (55%) believes that some forms of gambling should be legal and some should be illegal, with only a third (32%) reporting that all forms should be legal, and a tenth (13%) reporting that all forms should be illegal
- Nearly two-thirds (61%) believe that the level of gambling availability in the Commonwealth is acceptable prior to casino expansion
- Over half (61%) perceive the impact of gambling expansion on the state to be neutral, beneficial, or very beneficial while 39% perceive the impact to be somewhat or very harmful

### Massachusetts residents had mixed opinions about the impact of the planned introduction of casinos and a slot parlor in the state:

- Almost equal numbers of people believe it would be harmful (39%) and beneficial (42%)

### Perceived Impact of Expanded Gambling in Massachusetts



### People viewed the impact of having a new casino or slot parlor in their own community somewhat more negatively than they perceived the general impact for Massachusetts:

- 43% believe it would be harmful compared to 31% who believe it would be beneficial

### SEIGMA PROJECT OVERVIEW

SEIGMA is a project that uses experts from several disciplines to carry out the different parts of the Massachusetts Gaming Commission's research effort. The project team is dedicated to working closely with many other groups throughout the Commonwealth. The study uses a state-of-the-art design, rigorous data collection and research methods, and a careful analytic approach to establish the effects of casino gambling at state, regional, and local levels. The SEIGMA team collects its own data as well as using data gathered by other organizations. The SEIGMA study is funded by the Massachusetts Gaming Commission.