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## **SENATOR JOHN LIU AND ASSEMBLYMEMBER GRACE LEE HOST ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION ON THE IMPACT OF GAMBLING ON NY'S ASIAN AMERICAN COMMUNITIES**

**New York, NY** – In light of efforts to grant downstate casino licenses in NYC and surrounding areas, State Senator John C. Liu and Assemblymember Grace Lee today hosted a roundtable featuring a panel discussion on the impacts of gambling on New York's Asian American communities. Studies have been conducted about how much gaming revenue these new facilities will bring in for the city, but little has been said about the potential harmful effects of gambling on marginalized communities.

The roundtable featured panelists with backgrounds in academia, social services, and healthcare. Topics ranged from problem gaming in Asian American communities, confronting stereotypes, targeted advertising in Asian American communities, cultural risk factors, vulnerable groups, and barriers to treatment. Panelist recommendations focused on the need for more baseline data on gambling across different Asian American communities in NYC, as well as the need for more resources for community-based organizations, expanding research programming and training, and the need for community participation in the regulatory processes with the goal of reducing negative impacts on legalized gambling on vulnerable populations.

Panelists included:

Dr. Wooksoo Kim, Associate Professor, University at Buffalo, SUNY, School of Social Work,  
Dr. Simona C. Kwon, Associate Professor, NYU Grossman School of Medicine, Department of Population Health,

Yi-Ling Tan, Program Manager, NYU Grossman School of Medicine, Center for the Study of Asian American Health,

Karen Wang, Program Director of Asian American Recovery Services (AARS), HMH

**State Senator John Liu** stated, "Asian American communities in New York City stand to be significantly impacted by the creation of new casinos, especially as these communities have been aggressively targeted by big casino companies for years. Before any decisions are made about where these casinos are going, we need to take a hard look at how they will impact Asian American communities across the city and beyond. Casinos must play a key role in mitigating any potential harmful impacts to these communities and we will be looking for ways to ensure that along with any benefits these facilities are purported to bring to New Yorkers, there will also be accountability."

"In light of recent proposals to open casinos near Asian American communities in New York City districts, we are sounding the alarm about the mental health and addiction issues related to gambling within the Asian American community," **said Assemblymember Grace Lee**. "We

need a collective response to address these issues, and the conversations we had today are a first step to help us achieve that.”

**Dr. Simona Kwon of NYU’s Grossman School of Medicine** stated, “Problem gambling is a public health issue. There is very limited research and data, however, on gambling and how it impacts Asian Americans. The existing data indicates that there are social, cultural, policy and targeted marketing that make Asian Americans vulnerable to problem gambling. More resources, research and support is needed to be allocated to mitigate problem gambling and to support the Asian American and other vulnerable communities in New York City.”

**Karen Wang, Program Director of AARS**, stated, “With news of new casinos set to open in NYC, we believe our community members will be greatly impacted. Our agency has long seen the impact of pathological gambling in the patients we served. We hope this conversation is the beginning of more conversations to come.”

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