

## Hypocrisy plagues arm's-length agencies

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Human beings have the uncanny knack of gaining wisdom, the longer they walk the world.

But wonders never cease. And today's society continues to cause near epidemic levels of head-shaking and eyebrow-raising. I've strained many muscles over the past year in response to unbelievable occurrences in our world.

I have stopped saying "I've seen it all" for good reason.

As a regular lottery player, controversy surrounding such a pastime continues to surprise me.

It's a tax for people who can't do math! And as such, it's voluntary. Consider it on par with other "sin" taxes like those imposed on alcohol and cigarettes.

With all due respect to every religion, it's like putting money into the collection plate, in hopes of being blessed, some may feel that is no different than visiting [Indiana sportsbooks](#) to try and win a little cash on their favorite team.

Lotteries date back literally thousands of years. I remember my parents telling me of the famous "Irish Sweepstakes." We followed the evolution and demise of Wintario, and witnessed the arrival of Lotto 6/49 and the current variety of games of chance.

The governing body, the Ontario Lottery Corporation, earns billions and does contribute a ton of cash to charitable organizations each year. Since 1975, OLG has provided nearly \$38 billion to the province and the people of Ontario.

OLG's annual payments to the province have helped support health care; education, research, prevention and treatment of problem gambling; amateur sport, etc.

Just recently, the OLG created and released its first "corporate social responsibility report."

The document will serve as a baseline measure of OLG's efforts in a number of areas of social responsibility, including responsible gambling which is possible on sites like [funfair.io](#), and ways to address problem gambling; earning and keeping customers' trust; strengthening community involvement and reducing OLG's impact on the environment.

"Ultimately, our goal is to be a global leader when it comes to social responsibility and how we report on our CSR efforts," according to an OLG spokesperson.

I have no problem with enshrined methods of keeping an eye on pseudo-government agencies. I also have a vested interest in where our tax dollars go.

But here's the catch. This corporation provides an entertainment service that has inherent problems and then wants to mother our citizens and lecture them about the evils of gambling.

If our governments felt so strongly about the ill effects associated with gambling, why are they in the business?? From sports betting using [US Sportsbooks](#) and others, race tracks to lotteries and casinos, and even their online counterparts such as you're able to find if you . Our governments are knee-deep in what was once an outlawed activity.

They spend millions on advertising, to the point where most people have the slogans, "just imagine, live your dreams to the max" and doing the "happy dance" embedded in their brains.

And it's generating a lot of money.

On the flip side, it's also feathering a lot of nests.

A former head of the OLG was paid very handsomely, and given a massive departure package. There have been scandals, mistakes and fights over winning tickets. There have been scams, thefts and debates. The bottom line is it's a bureaucracy, and as such, it's inherently inefficient, wasteful and excessive. It's a licence to print money. But don't blame them. Its mandate and guidelines come from the leaders at Queen's Park. Maybe our MPPs should demand that more money be spent on covering medications through OHIP, and not letting people suffer or go into financial ruin over a few pills. Let's pump a few more million into education, roads, the environment and debt-reduction. The recent auditor general's report on the excessive perks at Ontario Power Generation was an unwelcome yuletide gift to taxpayers. When executives of a government agency earn six-figure incomes, and enjoy pensions ranging from \$180,000 to \$700,000, something is wrong. Not only are the lunatics running the asylum, they're padding their expense accounts and retiring in style. It's almost criminal. The government can't be all things ? and I don't expect them to be guidance counsellors or spiritual leaders. Take care of the nuts and bolts of running the province. Ensure people are healthy and have jobs. Make it a priority to protect our economy and natural resources. Shrink the civil service trough. Cap salaries. Limit tax increases. Do more with less. Each time the auditor general investigates and releases a report, the picture gets bleaker. Billions have literally been flushed down the drain. Our eHealth has impacted our real health. Our movers and shakers at all levels have to come to the realization the gluttony must end. They are not entitled to feast on hard-earned tax dollars. They do not deserve to retire in luxury, on the backs of their fellow citizens. And what are we to do about it? Force the hand. Call their bluff. Go "all in." Our complacency must come to an end. Apathy is not an option. Our future belongs as much to us as it does the throngs of government middle management at all levels. End the hypocrisy!