



## Arizona Department of Gaming

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### News Release

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### **A Strong Message Sent to Organizers of Illegal Gambling**

(Phoenix) – On February 3, 2012, a jury in the Maricopa County Superior Court convicted 68 year-old Harold Smith Lee, Jr., of Tempe, for his involvement in the Ace High Card Room and Social Club; which operated in Surprise, Arizona from 2008 to 2010. Lee's former gambling enterprises included The International Card and Game Players Association, The Arizona Card Room and The Arizona Card League. Lee was convicted on three felony counts, including conspiracy to engage in an illegal gambling business, promotion of gambling, and illegal conduct of an enterprise.

"We're sending a message in the strongest terms possible," said Mark Brnovich, Director of the Arizona Department of Gaming. "Illegal gambling will not be tolerated in our neighborhoods."

Lee is a former Phoenix Justice of the Peace, who served for the Northeast Justice Court Precinct from 1973 to 1985, and an outspoken advocate for off-reservation poker rooms. Additional card room operators, Michael Orlando and Ronald Curcio, pleaded guilty to reduced charges in exchange for their cooperation against Lee. Orlando, age 76, of Sun City West, was convicted on the felony charge of Promotion of Gambling, and was sentenced today to 18 months of probation. Curcio, age 69, of Sun City West, was convicted on the misdemeanor charge of Attempted Promotion of Gambling, and was sentenced today to 6 months of probation. All defendants will be jointly responsible to repay the Arizona Department of Gaming's costs of investigation.

The sentencing for Lee is scheduled to take place on March 7, 2012, at 9:30 AM, before Judge Bruce Cohen in Maricopa County Superior Court.

"I commend the Arizona Department of Gaming for its work on this case," said Attorney General Tom Horne. "Illegal gambling is obviously unacceptable, and it is especially disturbing that an Officer of the Court, in this case a now-former Justice of the Peace, would be involved. Thanks to the cooperation between the Attorney General's Office and the Department of Gaming, the operators of this ring are being held responsible for their actions."

For more information or to request an interview with Director Brnovich, contact Rick Medina, Assistant Director of the Arizona Department of Gaming at 602-255-3806.

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