NJ Gov Corzine Allowed to Join iMEGA Sports Betting Challenge

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Point-Spreads.com has learned that New Jersey Governor Jon Corzine is allowed to join the iMEGA challenge to overturn the current law banning sports betting. Over the vigorous objections of the US DOJ, US Magistrate Judge Tonianne J. Bongiovanni ruled that Corzine is permitted to join a legal challenge to a Federal law prohibiting state-regulated sports betting.

Bongiovanni ordered that Governor Corzine’s motion to intervene in iMEGA, et al v. Holder was granted, and that his attorneys must file their complaint no later than November 12th, 2009. The lawsuit initiated by iMEGA, asks the court to overturn the Professional and Amateur Sports Protection Act (PASPA) of 1991, which prohibits the expansion of state-regulated sports betting to all but four protected states - Nevada, Delaware, Montana and Oregon. The plantiff’s have argued the current sports betting law is unconstitutional because it favors certain states by allowing them to reap tax revenue from legal sports betting, while barring every other state from doing so.

“It’s nice to clear this hurdle and move closer to a court considering the merits of our challenge,” said Joe Brennan Jr., chairman of iMEGA, lead plaintiff in the suit. “It’s ridiculous the DOJ opposed the motion. We expect they’ll now ask the court to have all of the plaintiffs thrown out for lack of standing. It’s a waste of time and effort, but it seems they’ll do anything to prevent the court from examining this law.”

Recently, the United States Joint Committee on Taxation said that after reviewing legislation that would lift an online gambling ban (UIGEA), it concluded the move would generate $41.8 billion over 10 years. The new legislation being proposed would allow internet poker, but continue a ban on other forms of internet gambling including sports betting. This is why the news about Corzine being able to join the fight to legalize sports betitng is such big news, giving the industry some much needed credibility.

“The irony is that the DOJ actually opposed this law (PASPA) when it was enacted, on the very same grounds we’ve listed in our suit,” Brennan said.