

# Former gambler tries to sue N.S. for addictive VLTs

## Province and the ALC argue risks of gambling well known

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A former gambling addict in Nova Scotia is asking a judge to give the go-ahead on his attempt to sue the province and the Atlantic Lottery Corporation, arguing they didn't do enough to warn players about the risks of video lottery terminals .

Bernie Walsh said the government knew VLTs were more addictive than other forms of gambling, but didn't do enough to portray those warnings to players when they legalized the machines in 1991.

Walsh said it took years for Nova Scotia to warn gamblers, but by then he was already hooked and on his way to bankruptcy and ruining his marriage.

"VLTs are called the crack cocaine of gambling all over the world. That's the nature of the machine," he said.

Barry Mason, Walsh's lawyer, said VLTS are different than other forms of gambling, including poker.

"The difference is you know there are 52 cards in the deck. With the VLTs, you don't know how the machine is being controlled from behind by a computer that is automatically designed, once you press the button, to whether or not you lose," he said.

But lawyers for the province and the Atlantic Lottery Corporation said the case is a waste of resources.

They said everyone knows gambling is risky.

Justice Arthur Leblanc has reserved his decision.