To require policies and programs to research, prevent, and address the harmful consequences of gambling disorder among members of the Armed Forces and their dependents, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Ms. WARREN introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on ____________________________

A BILL

To require policies and programs to research, prevent, and address the harmful consequences of gambling disorder among members of the Armed Forces and their dependents, and for other purposes.

1 Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-
2 tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

3 SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

4 This Act may be cited as the
5 [“________________________ Act of ________”].

6 SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

7 Congress makes the following findings:
(1) Gambling disorder is a public health concern characterized by increasing preoccupation with gambling, loss of control, restlessness, or irritability when attempting to stop gambling, and continuation of the gambling behavior in spite of mounting serious, negative consequences.

(2) Gambling disorder is an addiction similar to substance-use disorders, such as those associated with alcohol and drugs.

(3) Gambling disorder is a preoccupation with gambling and a loss of control, associated with a higher risk of suicide attempts, substance-use disorders, and other mental-health conditions, in addition to being associated with financial and legal problems.

(4) According to the National Council on Problem Gambling, it is estimated that 56,000 active duty members of the Armed Forces meet criteria for gambling disorder.

(5) However, according to the Department of Defense, an average of 120 military personnel seek treatment for gambling disorder each year.

(6) According to a 2017 report by the Government Accountability Office—
(A) the Department of Defense operates more than 3,100 slot machines at military installations overseas that are available to members of the Armed Forces and their families;

(B) those slot machines generate approximately $100,000,000 in revenue for the Department, which is used for further recreational activities for members of the Armed Forces;

(C) the Department and the Coast Guard do not systematically screen for gambling disorder; and

(D) the Department and the Coast Guard do not address gambling disorder in a similar manner to other addictive disorders, such as alcohol-related disorders.

SEC. 3. INCLUSION OF GAMBLING DISORDER IN HEALTH ASSESSMENTS FOR MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES AND RELATED RESEARCH EFFORTS.

(a) ANNUAL PERIODIC HEALTH ASSESSMENT.—The Secretary of Defense shall incorporate medical screening questions specific to gambling disorder into the Annual Periodic Health Assessment (DD Form 3024) conducted by the Department of Defense for members of the Armed Forces.
(b) RESEARCH EFFORTS.—The Secretary shall incorporate into ongoing research efforts of the Department questions on gambling disorder, as appropriate, including by restoring such questions into the Health Related Behaviors Survey of Active Duty Military Personnel.

SEC. 4. DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICIES AND PROGRAMS TO PREVENT AND TREAT GAMBLING DISORDER AMONG MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES AND THEIR DEPENDENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Defense shall develop and implement policies and programs on prevention, education, and treatment of gambling disorder and integrate gambling disorder into existing mental health and substance abuse programs.

(b) CONSULTATION.—The Secretary shall develop the policies and programs described in subsection (a) in coordination with the Interagency Task Force on Military and Veterans Mental Health.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the congressional defense committees a report on efforts undertaken pursuant to subsection (a).

(d) CONGRESSIONAL DEFENSE COMMITTEES DEFINED.—In this section, the term “congressional defense
committees’” has the meaning given that term in section 101 of title 10, United States Code.