



Resolution of the NCPG Board of Directors Regarding the Legalization of Sports Gambling

Adopted February 27, 2017

Whereas, the National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG) is neutral on legalized gambling, including gambling on sporting events;

Whereas, a limited amount of legal and a vast amount of illegal sports betting occurs across America;

Whereas, sports betting is often associated problem gambling;

Whereas, NCPG has concerns about the impact of gambling on the health of athletes, as research indicates that athletes are more likely to be at risk for addictions;

Whereas, youth are already frequently exposed to advertising for legal gambling through league and team sponsorship and endorsement deals, as well as advertising and promotion for unregulated offshore gambling in media and online outlets;

Whereas, NCAA has found that most student athletes who gamble started long before they came to college;

Whereas, preventing and treating gambling addiction among players protects their health and the integrity of the game;

Whereas, expansion will likely increase availability and acceptability of sports gambling and thus increase participation, which may lead to more gambling problems;

Whereas, any expansion of gambling must be accompanied by increased support for addiction prevention and treatment programs;

Whereas, expansion of gambling at the state level has not been uniformly accompanied by appropriate—or in some cases any—funds to prevent or treat gambling addiction;

Whereas, current public problem gambling prevention and treatment services—especially for youth—are insufficient in most states and nonexistent in many.

Therefore, Be It Resolved:

NCPG calls upon all stakeholders in the debate over legalized sports gambling to recognize the potential impact on gambling addiction.

NCPG believes the expansion of legalized sports gambling in the United States will likely increase gambling participation and problems unless the following steps are taken to minimize harm.

Legislators and Regulators Should:

Ensure that any expansion of sports gambling includes dedicated funds to prevent and treat gambling addiction.

Require sports betting operators to implement responsible gaming programs which include comprehensive employee training, self-exclusion, ability to set limits on time and money spent betting, specific requirements for the inclusion of help/prevention messages in external marketing, and assign a regulatory agency to enforce them.

Conduct surveys of the prevalence of gambling addiction prior to expansion and at regular periods thereafter to monitor impacts of legalized sports betting.

Establish a consistent minimum age for sports gambling and related fantasy games.

Leagues and Teams Should:

Establish specific gambling addiction prevention and education programs for youth athletes prior to high school all the way through college and into professional sports.

Ensure that athletes and personnel have a safe harbor to seek help for gambling related problems, and qualified Employee Assistance Programs and counseling personnel available to provide assistance.

Provide mandatory educational briefings to players and team personnel on team/league policy regarding gambling risks and where to get help for gambling problems.

Utilize their high-profile opportunities in the media to help send responsible gaming messages to their fans and the public at large.

Join NCPG to help maintain our nationwide safety net and build prevention and treatment programs specific to sports gambling.

The Media Should:

Promote the National Problem Gambling Helpline (800-522-4700) Network as a public service in every newspaper and media outlet which prints or publicizes betting lines or odds.

Include the Helpline on printed or downloadable gambling documents or forms, such as brackets for March Madness or other tournaments.