

September 26, 2019

The Honorable James Inhofe
Chairman
Committee on Armed Services
228 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Jack Reed
Ranking Member
Committee on Armed Services
228 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Adam Smith
Chairman
Armed Services Committee
2216 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mac Thornberry
Ranking Member
Armed Services Committee
2216 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Inhofe, Chairman Smith, Ranking Member Reed, and Ranking Member Thornberry:

The National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG) writes to support a provision within the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal year 2020 (NDAA). As incorporated by the House of Representatives, the provision will require the Department of Defense (DOD) to update its regulations, instructions, and other guidance with respect to explicitly including gambling disorder. As conference negotiations begin, we urge you to ensure that this provision is included in the final conference report.

The NDAA provision would require the Department of Defense (DOD) to update its regulations, instructions, and guidance to explicitly include gambling disorder within 180 days of the passage of the Act. The National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG) believes this provision is critical to protect the health and welfare of our servicemembers by preventing gambling addiction.

The DOD has yet to finish updating its regulations, instructions, and other guidance to include gambling disorder, and it's important to note that the DOD does not systematically screen for gambling disorder as outlined in the DOD-adopted *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*.¹

NCPG estimates that as many as 56,000 active duty members of the Armed Forces meet the criteria for gambling disorder and research reveals that military members and veterans are 2-3 times more likely to develop a gambling problem. Research by the Government Accountability Office (GAO) reveals that military personnel and their families are exposed to more than 3,000 slot machines on military bases located Outside the Continental United States (OCONUS) where over \$100 million is gambled away every year.² Yet, due to the stigmas associated with the disorder, less than 10% of those with gambling problems seek help.

The signatories below represent a diverse array of problem gambling leaders who provide full support to the NDAA provision. As you finalize the NDAA, we urge you to include a provision requiring the

¹ "DSM-5 Diagnostic Criteria: Gambling Disorder." n.d. <https://www.ncpgambling.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/DSM-5-Diagnostic-Criteria-Gambling-Disorder.pdf>.

² U.S. Government Accountability Office, "DOD and the Coast Guard Need to Screen for Gambling Disorder Addiction and Update Guidance," Jan. 30, 2017, <https://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-17-114>.

Department to update its behavior health regulations, instructions, and guidance in the final conference report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Keith Whyte', written in a cursive style.

Keith Whyte
Executive Director
National Council on Problem Gambling

AdR Counseling LLC

Alabama Council on Compulsive Gambling

Alcohol and Drug Dependency Services of SE Iowa

Arizona Council on Compulsive Gambling

Association of Problem Gambling Service Administrators

Atlantic Professional Counseling Center

BarZero

Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church

Best Behavioral Health Services

The Better Institute

Bridgeway

Bristlecone Family Resources

Caesar's Entertainment

California Council on Problem Gambling

California Friday Night Live Partnership

CAPS Mental Health and DUI Services, LLC

Center for Gambling Studies, Rutgers University

Cherokee Nation Behavioral Health

Choice Counseling & Recovery

Choices Treatment Center

Chrystals Center, Inc.

Club Recovery

Coastal Treatment Services

Connecticut Council on Problem Gambling

Consumers for Digital Fairness

Continuum Recovery of Colorado

Council on Compulsive Gambling of New Jersey

Council on Compulsive Gambling of Pennsylvania

The Counseling Center at Middlesex

Creating Family Choices

Daring Ventures Counseling, Coaching, and Consulting, LLC

Delaware Council on Gambling Problems

Evergreen Council on Problem Gambling

Fairview Recovery Services

Feldman Consulting, LLC

Finding Hope Therapy

First Choice Services

Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling

G.R.I.P.

Gamban

GVC

Illinois Council on Problem Gambling

Indiana Council on Problem Gambling

InnerSenses Inc.

Inspired Healing

Integrity 1st

International Gaming Institute at University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Iowa Department of Public Health

Kentucky Council on Problem Gambling

Lake Geauga Recovery Centers

Lanie's Hope

Lao Assistance Center of Minnesota

Louisiana Association on Compulsive Gambling

Lutheran Social Services of North Dakota

Maine Council on Problem Gambling

Michigan Association on Problem Gambling

Maple Lake HOA

Maryland Center for Excellence on Problem Gambling

Maryland Council on Problem Gambling

Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling

McGill University

Michigan Association on Problem Gambling

Mid-Hudson Problem Gambling Resource Center

Minnesota Crisis Intervention Team

Minnesota Department of Human Services - Behavioral Health Division

Mississippi Council on Problem and Compulsive Gambling

Montana Council on Problem Gambling

mTx

Nebraska Council on Problem Gambling

Nevada Council on Problem Gambling

New Dawn Wellness & Recovery Center

New Hampshire Council on Problem Gambling

New York Council on Problem Gambling

North Carolina Council on Problem Gambling

Northstar Problem Gambling Alliance

Northwest Louisiana Human Services District

Ohio Mental Health & Addiction Services

OhioMHAS/Get Set Before You Bet

Oklahoma Association on Problem and Compulsive Gambling

Oregon Council on Problem Gambling

Oregon Lottery

Peer Coach Academy of Colorado

Problem Gambling Coalition of Colorado

The Problem Gamblers Help Network of West Virginia

Problem Gambling Network of Ohio

Professional Wellness Management

Psychotherapy & EMDR Trauma Counseling

Reno Problem Gambling Center

reSTART Life, PLLC

Rhode Island Council on Problem Gambling

Rosie's Gaming Emporium

SEKS Problem Gambling Task Force

Serenity Counseling for All Ages

South Central Kansas Problem Gambling Task Force

Southwest Guidance Center

Steuben Council on Addictions

Vanguard Center for Gambling Recovery - Project Turnabout

Vinland National Center

Virginia Council on Problem Gambling

Voices of Problem Gambling Recovery, Inc.

Volunteers of America Oregon

Washington State Gambling Commission

Way Back Inn

Wisconsin Council on Problem Gambling

Wyoming Council in Problem Gambling