



Statement from the National Council on Problem Gambling The Protecting Children from Abusive Games Act

May 8, 2019

The National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG) applauds Senator Hawley’s call for the Federal Trade Commission to incorporate and enforce robust consumer protections for loot boxes aimed at youth. Players, many of whom are children, who pay to unlock a loot box are risking something of value to them for the chance of winning a prize or reward that is also of value. Factors common to many loot boxes include random distribution of prizes, variable value of prizes plus visual and sound cues associated with participation and reward. Like gambling, these features are well known to trigger urges to play longer, faster, and with increased excitement. For some users this leads to the development of problems. The gambling addiction field has developed a variety of innovative responsible play policies and programs that better inform customers, prevent addiction-related problems, facilitate treatment seeking, support recovery, and increase the evidence base. Multiple recent studies in this area conclude that paying for loot boxes is linked to gambling problems. NCPG looks forward to continuing to fiercely advocate to mitigate the risks associated with loot boxes aimed at youth.

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