State of the States: Problem Gambling Services in the United States

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A (Very) Brief History

- Gambling (especially related to divination) is one of the oldest activities.
  - Why do dice have pips and not numbers?
    Recognizable dice date back to 1,300 BC but the Hindu-Arabic number system only originated 700 AD—2,000 years later!!!!!

- Americans may be more prone to take risks—immigrants, pioneers, entrepreneurs...

- But also a deep rooted tradition of viewing gambling as a sin—gamblers (especially addicts) were seen as godless, greedy, guilty...

- In the US, gambling is generally illegal unless a certain form has been specifically legalized.
Why A National Issue?  5 P’s

- **Presence:** Legal in 48 states + 2/3rds of tribes.
- **Participation:** 85% of American adults have gambled at least once in their lifetimes:
  - 65% at least once in past year;
  - 30% at least once in past month;
  - 15% at least once in past week.
- **Prevalence:** 2-3% meet criteria for a gambling disorder = 4-6 million adults + 500,000 adolescents.
- **Proceeds:** $95 billion to states and companies + $6 billion to U.S. Treasury from tax on winnings.
- **Problems:** In addition to personal financial, emotional and physical harm, cost to society from crime, bankruptcy, etc...$6.9 billion.
- **Perception:** Large majorities believe problem gambling is a serious issue.
National (Conflicting) Perceptions

- 65% believe gambling is morally acceptable **BUT**..
- 70% say legalized gambling encourages people to gamble more than they can afford.
- 32% believe problem gambling is mostly a personal or moral weakness, 13% mostly a disease, 51% both **BUT**...
- 68% think controlling compulsive gambling is mostly a matter of willpower.
  - Ipsos-Reid (2008)
Federal Government (Generally, Hopefully or Frighteningly) Reflects Our Priorities

• *Not a single cent* of the $3.55 trillion Federal budget is dedicated to problem gambling.
• Not a single person in the entire Federal government has problem gambling in their job responsibility or description.
• As a result, what programs we have been able to get are generally ad-hoc, one-time and use extremely scarce discretionary funds.
Previous/Current Federal Efforts

- National Institute of Mental Health project – Rachel Volberg
- National Gambling Impact Study Commission
  - Report itself
  - NRC book
  - Special PA
- Center for Mental Health Services contract
- Center for Substance Abuse Treatment
  - Co-occurring designation - Dr. H. Westley Clark
  - Addiction Technology Transfer Centers
  - Sponsor Midwest Conference on Problem Gambling and Substance Abuse
- National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information
  - Problem gambling toolkit
- Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
- On going National Institutes of Health research
## Public vs. Private Sector

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<th><strong>Public</strong></th>
<th><strong>Private</strong></th>
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<td>- Initiated with expansion of legalized gambling</td>
<td>- “Grassroots” efforts</td>
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<td>- Occurs at the local and state level in the US</td>
<td>- Typically non-profit</td>
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<td>- Limited to what is in legislative intent and appropriations</td>
<td>- Longer history</td>
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<td>- Typically state HHS agencies</td>
<td>- Limited to missions and funding restrictions</td>
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<td>- Typically Affiliate Councils, also includes some industry efforts</td>
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About the APGSA

- Formed in 2000
- Mission: To support the development of services that will reduce the impact of problem gambling.
- Vision: An active association that enhances the effectiveness and efficiency of its member organizations through support, information dissemination, and adherence to professional standards.
- Membership currently at 31 states
- Survey US states for public PG services every two years
APGSA Survey Methodology

• A survey was completed on 46 states.
  ○ Survey emailed then completed by representative(s) from one or more government agencies and/or state council
  ○ "Phase II" interviews were conducted with 41 survey respondents to review the information provided with one of the study's PIs

• For those states that did not complete a survey
  ○ An average of 7 contact attempts were made
  ○ Web search provided some information (Florida & WV)
  ○ Unable to obtain any information (Ohio & Georgia)
Only 15 states fund one or more dedicated position(s) to administer problem gambling programs.
Current Status of Public Efforts

- **APGSA survey of 50 states**
  - 2001 – 13 states with problem gambling funding
  - 2008 – 34 states with problem gambling funding
  - 2010 - 38 states with problem gambling funding

- **Per capita funding of PG services**
  - Range of <$0.01 to $1.62
  - Average: $0.33 ; Median: $0.20
  - CA – Per capita gambling revenue= $228
    - Per Capita problem gambling allocation=$0.24
Comprehensive Problem Gambling Act Awareness & Desired Outcomes

- Aware: 100.00%
- Not Aware: 10.00%
- Treatment/Prevention: 50.00%
- Research: 40.00%
- Staff/Training: 30.00%
- Coordinated/Nationwide: 20.00%
- Legislation Improvements: 10.00%
2010 Survey of Publicly Funded Programs in the United States

- Full report with analysis to be completed by early September and available on www.APGSA.org

APGSA
ASSOCIATION OF PROBLEM GAMBLING SERVICE ADMINISTRATORS
About NCPG

- The national ADVOCATE for programs and services to assist problem gamblers and their families.
- Founded in 1972.
- NEUTRAL on legalized gambling.
- National grassroots non-profit with chapters in 35 of 50 states, including Oregon.
- Work with government, gaming industry & community.
Core Programs

- Helpline Number (800.522.4700) & Network
- Nat’l Problem Gambling Awareness Week
- Annual Conference on Problem Gambling Prevention, Treatment, Research & Recovery (June 30-July 2, 2011, Boston, MA)
- Public Awareness & Media
- Certification Administration
- ADVOCACY!
Comprehensive Problem Gambling Act

- **Authorizes** Federal health agencies to address PG and **appropriates $71,000,000** for grants.
- House version introduced June 2009 as H.R. 2906; referred to Committee on Energy & Commerce, Health Subcommittee.
  - 57 sponsors as of 6/4/10
- Senate version introduced as S. 3418 May 2010; referred to Health, Education, Labor & Pensions Committee.
  - Lead sponsors Merkley (D-OR) and Johanns (R-NE)
Section 3: SAMHSA Authorities

Designates Federal lead

Improve coordination and collaboration among states

Synergistic benefit from coordinated approaches

Provide technical assistance and guidance to states
Section 4: Public Awareness

- Model after other successful public health initiatives
- Create common themes, look and feel to augment existing state and local community efforts
- Early identification and intervention key to reducing harm
- National Problem Gambling Awareness Week
States unable to fund meaningful research independently
Encourages collaboration between Universities and existing programs to identify policies and services that produce positive outcomes
Supports the goal of improving efficiency and effectiveness of problem gambling services
Section 6: Treatment

- Only 32 states provide any funding for problem gambling treatment
- Encourages public/private partnerships to meet identified needs
- Intended to fill gaps in services, not supplant existing efforts
- Flexibility in service design and delivery
Summary

- Common sense solution to identified needs
- Fills gaps in policy and programs only the Federal government can address
- Expands and supports existing programs which have demonstrated effectiveness
- Supported by numerous national, state and local organizations.
“The punishment of wise men who refuse to take part in the affairs of government is to live under the government of unwise men.”

Plato

WE NEED YOUR HELP TO PASS THIS HISTORIC LEGISLATION!!!!

Contact Congress—ask your Representatives to support H.R. 2906 and your Senators to support S. 3418. For legislative tools, tips and templates, go to:

www.ncpgambling.org/advocacy
Wear With Pride

FIGHT GAMBLING ADDICTION!

SUPPORT H.R. 2906 S. 3418
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