



# Lane County Public Health

## Prevention Program - Problem Gambling Prevention

**DATE:** February 15, 2013

**TO:** House Committee on Human Services and Housing

**RE:** HB 2166 | Requires alcohol server education courses to include curriculum related to recognizing characteristics indicative of addiction to, or other emotional or behavioral issues related to, playing games of state lottery. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

Chair Tomei and Members of the Committee,

The Lane County Board of Commissioners has reviewed and is in support of HB 2166.

Ensuring that all alcohol server trainings provide information on problem gambling would provide a public health and public safety benefit to the people of Lane County and state of Oregon by alignment with OLCC's other goals for server education. Providing problem gambling information along with OLCC training would be an effective, efficient use of resources and assist in potential help for problem gamblers – without having to directly intervene or “cut off” individuals at risk.

The following are some key elements to consider with this measure.

- Over three-fourths (76 percent) of problem gamblers enrolled in Oregon gambling treatment programs reported video lottery retailers as their preferred gambling location (Oregon Health Authority, 2012).
- About a third of clients reported concurrent alcohol problems (10.6% were heavy users of alcohol and another 23.5% reported having problems with alcohol; Oregon Health Authority, 2012).
- There are precedents in other regions for incorporating problem gambling material with alcohol server training; as one example, the Atlantic Lottery has officially incorporated problem gambling education into their online and in-person alcohol server trainings.
- In Oregon, resources have already been used and are readily available to incorporate. Some Oregon counties have already delivered problem gambling training material in OLCC server trainings. Feedback from these trainings was: 1) problem gambling material is consistent with, and easy to incorporate in, OLCC server trainings, 2) most servers had previously no formal (or informal) training on problem gambling, and 3) most servers reported recognizing signs of problem gambling in patrons, and appreciated problem gambling information and resources for help.
- Material as outlined in this bill would only take about 15-20 minutes to cover.
- While not all OLCC licensees are video lottery retailers, incorporation of a small amount of education around problem gambling would take little time, and would be helpful if an alcohol server leaves one place of business to another that offers video lottery.

Thank you for the opportunity to be heard on this issue.

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