



Testimony submitted to the House Committee on Human Services and Housing
HB 3316
Wednesday, April 1st 2015

Chair Keny-Guyer and members of the committee. This testimony is submitted on behalf of Cascadia Behavioral Healthcare. My name is Phillip Yassenoff and I am the Program Manager for Cascadia's Problem Gambling Services. Thank you for providing me with this opportunity to lend support to House Bill 3316. As the program manager, and a clinician, at Oregon's largest outpatient gambling treatment program, I see the true, often hidden costs of gambling addiction. This addiction takes a huge toll on families, financial stability, and on the mental health of those affected. Fortunately, treatment is effective for the vast majority of clients we serve.

House Bill 3316 provides oversight to insure that the only casinos in Oregon are those constitutionally permitted on Native American lands. Many of the establishments frequented by our clients are required to make no more than 50% of their income from gambling. These establishments often present themselves as mom and pop deli's, yet tend to function as mini-casino's—making a disproportionate percentage of their earnings from gambling.

The majority of our clients play video poker or slot machines primarily at these establishments. As those citizens lose their money, they also lose the illusion that these delis are in the sandwich and coffee business. These Oregonians hear a clear message about responsible gambling from the Lottery; yet are also aware that the same institution is reluctant to provide meaningful oversight over the mini-casino where they gamble.

House Bill 3316 could correct this incongruent message and ultimately address an issue that can play a part in maintaining gambling addiction in Oregon. Thank you again for this opportunity to share my professional concerns about this vital topic.

Philip Yassenoff
Certified Gambling Addiction Counselor II
Cascadia Problem Gambling Services