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TO: The Honorable Keny-Guyer, Chair
House Committee on Human Services and Housing

FROM: Nicole Corbin, LPC
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SUBJECT: HB 3317

Chair Keny-Guyer and members of the committee; I am Nicole Corbin, Addiction Services Manager with the Oregon Health Authority (OHA), Addictions and Mental Health Division (AMH). I am here to provide information on HB 3317, which directs the Oregon State Lottery Commission, in coordination with Oregon Liquor Control Commission, to report biennially on the distribution and concentration of video lottery game terminals in relation to socioeconomic status of neighborhoods or communities in which premises of video lottery retailers are located. AMH takes a neutral position on this bill.

Problem gambling is a public health concern. Greater accessibility of gambling opportunities is shown to increase gambling among adults and youth, money spent on gambling, and the numbers of problem gamblers. Access to gambling has continued to expand in Oregon over the past 20 years. Because of this growth and accessibility, it is essential to mitigate the risks and consequences associated with problem gambling. This is done through access to prevention and treatment services, responsible gambling guidelines, policies and practices, and data collection and reporting.

It is estimated that 81,000 (2.7 percent) of adult Oregonians meet the criteria for Gambling Disorder, and for each disordered gambler, many others are affected (e.g., spouse, children, employer). Taken as a group, Oregon's disordered gamblers produce over 500 million dollars in social costs annually, impacting the criminal justice system, the human services

system, and Oregon's overall economic health.

In fiscal year 2013-14, 1,119 gamblers received treatment services, along with 146 family clients through publically funded problem gambling treatment programs in Oregon. Of the 1,119 problem gambling clients, 88.7 percent reported their primary gambling activity as machines and 74.1 percent reported their primary gambling location as a video lottery retailer. As the data shows, the majority of problem gambling treatment seekers are addicted to video lottery terminals (VLTs).

HB 3317 would provide useful information to OHA's problem gambling services for the purposes of strategic planning and programming. That is, this information may identify high risk areas and once identified, OHA problem gambling services can target those high risk areas with problem gambling prevention and education messaging to reduce the risk and harm from gambling, and improving referral pathways to treatment services for those in need.

I appreciate the opportunity to share this information with you and would be happy to provide any additional information you need as you consider this bill.