

Date June 1, 2015

TO: The Honorable Senator Lee Beyer, Chair  
Senate Business and Transportation

FROM: Greta Coe  
Problem Gambling Services Manager  
Addictions and Mental Health Division  
Oregon Health Authority  
503-945-8567

SUBJECT: HB 3318a

Chair Beyer and members of the committee; I am Greta Coe, Problem Gambling Services Manager with the Oregon Health Authority (OHA), Addictions and Mental Health Division (AMH). I am here to provide information on HB 3318a, which establishes the Oregon State Lottery Responsible Gambling Code of Practices and requires the Oregon State Lottery Commission to operate in compliance with the Responsible Gambling Code of Practices. Additionally, it directs the Commission to operate state lottery games in safe environments and in manner that facilitates responsible gaming and discourages problem gambling. AMH supports this bill.

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.

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, and responsible gaming guidelines, policies and practices.

Disordered gambling is an addiction, not a behavior problem, a moral failing, or a choice. Disordered gambling, previously referred to as problem or pathological gambling, is classified in the fifth edition of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM-5) in the chapter devoted to Substance-Related and Addictive Disorders. It was previously described as an impulse control disorder. The new manual reflects decades of research findings showing that gambling disorder is similar to substance-related disorders in clinical expression, brain origin, comorbidity, physiology, and treatment.

Responsible gaming and gambling practices are important to OHA, as the Oregon Lottery serves a vital role in supporting the Oregon Health Authority's Problem Gambling Services. If the Oregon Lottery were to take a less active responsible gambling stance, Oregon's problem gambling services would be negatively impacted on a number of fronts. To most successfully reduce gambling related harm, the issue needs a comprehensive solution and this bill would support our partnership and efforts. The Oregon Lottery is an integral part of that solution and without the Lottery's active involvement, OHA's efforts to reduce gambling related harm will be hampered.

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.