



Bipartisan Bill on Sports Betting Includes First-Ever Federal Funding for Problem Gambling

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WASHINGTON, DC (December 20, 2018) – A bipartisan bill outlining a Federal framework for sports betting was introduced on Wednesday by US Senators Orrin Hatch (R-UT) and Charles Schumer (D-NY). If passed, the *Sports Wagering Market Integrity Act of 2018* would establish protections for consumers among other measures. The bill includes provisions for Federal funding dedicated to problem gambling (which encompasses gambling disorder and gambling addiction), the first time such a provision has ever been included in any Federal bill.

Among the bill's consumer protection provisions:

- Appropriates \$5,000,000 to the Department of Health and Human Services for gambling addiction research.
- Dedicates revenue from the existing Federal sports wagering excise tax to programs for the prevention and treatment of gambling disorder as well as law enforcement.
- Establishes a nationwide self-exclusion service that people with gambling problems can voluntarily use and that sports betting operators in all states can utilize to honor these requests for prohibiting personal bets.
- Puts in place a variety of gambling-related consumer protections, including disclosure, advertising.

Keith Whyte, Executive Director of the National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG), said, "We thank Senator Hatch and Senator Schumer for their leadership in addressing problem gambling. This bill provides the first-ever dedicated Federal funding for gambling addiction prevention, research and treatment programs. These measures are a critical first step to addressing problem gambling across the country, balancing the costs and benefits of legalized gambling."

While NCPG strongly supports these provisions, it takes no position on the overall legislation and remains neutral on legalized gambling.

In May 2018, the Supreme Court struck down the Federal prohibition of state-authorized sports betting. Since the decision, eight states have joined Nevada in legalizing sports betting. As many as 30 more states are expected to consider sports betting legislation in 2019. The National Council on Problem Gambling expects that many states will choose to allow sports gambling, resulting in a massive expansion of gambling opportunities (including online sports betting) and a corresponding increase in gambling participation and gambling disorder, unless significant steps are taken to minimize harm.

In response, NCPG developed the Safer Sports Betting Initiative (SSBI) that includes [Responsible Gambling Principles for Sports Betting Legislation](#), a set of standards designed to protect individuals, gaming companies, and legislators. The only national non-profit that works with constituents on all facets of gambling, NCPG works to minimize the economic and social costs associated with gambling addiction, and is currently conducting the ground-breaking National Survey of Gambling Attitudes and Gambling Experiences (NGAGE). The survey will provide baseline statistics to measure the impact of this expected gambling expansion going forward and will also enable evidence-based, data-driven responsive measures. The NGAGE survey data is expected to be released in January 2019.

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About the National Council on Problem Gambling

NCPG is the national advocate for problem gamblers and their families. NCPG is neutral on legalized gambling and works with all stakeholders to promote responsible gambling. If you or someone you know has a gambling problem, call or text the National Problem Gambling Helpline at 1-800-522-4700 or visit www.ncpgambling.org/chat for confidential help.

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