



## NCPG Statement on Making Problem Gambling Assistance Reach Every Community in America

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**Washington, DC** – The National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG) in conjunction with their Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee (DEI), issued the following statement:

“Over the past month, we’ve have seen signs of progress in the fight for justice play out before our eyes in two instances. Former Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin was found guilty in the murder of George Floyd. Long before the case went to trial, federal legislation was introduced called *The George Floyd Justice In Policing Act*, which aims to combat police misconduct, excessive force, and racial bias in policing.

“Asian Americans have experienced an onslaught of derogatory statements and acts of violence because some people have believed the rhetoric surrounding the geographic origin of the virus. In response *The COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act* became the law of the land. Whether in the judicial or legislative branches of government, progress toward justice is being made.

“The purpose of NCPG is to serve as the national advocate for programs and services to assist people and families affected by problem gambling and to improve health and wellness by reducing its personal, social, and economic costs. Its mission is to lead state and national stakeholders in the development of comprehensive policy and programs for those affected by problem gambling. The DEI Committee advises NCPG on issues affecting communities of color and other marginalized groups to ensure that the organization is working to make effective and accessible help for problem gambling available to everyone.

“The enactment of properly funded federal legislation to address problem gambling would be the most effective way to help limit the suffering of the approximately six million Americans with this disorder, which also impacts their loved ones. That is why NCPG-and its state affiliate chapters work to raise public awareness about problem gambling, and advocate for funding for services as well as responsible gambling regulations.

“Some Americans continue to struggle to fully comprehend how cultural and historical experiences can shape the identity of different racial and ethnic groups. The lack of understanding often shows up in

health care, but work is being done to bridge these gaps. That includes introducing legislative solutions at the local, state and federal levels to provide support, treatment, and hope for those who suffer with mental health challenges like gambling addiction. However, we know that much more can be done to help people and communities of color.

“Many people think that individuals with addictions should just stop and not do it anymore. They feel it is a moral failing or lack of willpower - not a treatable disease.

“Gambling addiction is a hidden addiction that nevertheless demands attention. You can’t screen for it with a blood test, but the psychological burdens are profound. For example, one in five people who have severe gambling problems will attempt suicide. Intergenerational trauma, abuse, and other personal aspects of being different feed into one another and can perpetuate addiction.

“It is time for all of us to treat people as individuals. If a person struggles with an addiction, we need to ask ourselves, ‘what happened, what are they struggling with?’ We must work hard to reach out to other races and ethnicities to learn about their cultures and find our commonalities going forward.

“If you grew up in the US, you are no doubt familiar with this declaration: ‘I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.’ We must, as a nation, make our actions embody these words – make them permeate how we think about the multitude of challenges we face as a nation. If you treat others as you would want to be treated, we are likely to achieve better results, including that vision of liberty and justice for all.”

#### **About the National Council on Problem Gambling**

Based in Washington DC, the National Council on Problem Gambling is the only national nonprofit organization that seeks to minimize the economic and social costs associated with gambling addiction by working with all stakeholders. NCPG is neutral on legalized gambling. If gambling becomes a problem, NCPG urges people who gamble, as well as their loved ones, to contact the National Problem Gambling Helpline, which offers hope and help without judgment or shame. If you or someone you know has a gambling problem, call or text 1-800-522-4700 or visit [www.ncpgambling.org/chat](http://www.ncpgambling.org/chat). Help is available 24/7 - it is free, anonymous and confidential.

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