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**SENATE BILL 5818**

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**State of Washington 66th Legislature 2019 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Conway and Keiser

AN ACT Relating to the creation of a joint legislative task force on problem gambling; adding a new section to chapter 9.46 RCW; creating a new section; and providing an expiration date.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The legislature finds that the state continues to have a responsibility to provide resources related to prevention, treatment, and recovery for persons suffering with a gambling problem or gambling disorder. The state last reviewed problem gambling policies in 2005 and the gambling industry has nearly doubled to more than a three billion dollar industry since this last review. The legislature directed the gambling commission to contract for a preliminary problem gambling study in 2018. The study surveyed and reviewed current problem gambling programs and services and responsible gaming practices in the state and provided a report and recommendation to the legislature based on the findings in the report.

Therefore, the legislature finds that a joint legislative task force is necessary in order for there to be a comprehensive review of current problem gambling funding, services, programs, and policies, including review of the gambling commission's problem gambling study, report, and recommendations. The task force will be responsible for providing recommendations to the legislature on how the state should continue to meet its responsibility to assist those who suffer from a gambling problem or disorder.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 9.46 RCW to read as follows:

(1) A joint legislative task force on problem gambling is created. The task force membership is composed of:

(a) One member from each of the two largest caucuses of the senate, appointed by the president of the senate;

(b) One member from each of the two largest caucuses in the house of representatives, appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives;

(c) A representative from the health care authority;

(d) A representative from the department of health;

(e) A representative from the gambling commission;

(f) A representative from the state lottery;

(g) A representative from the horse racing commission;

(h) A representative from a nonprofit organization with experience in problem gambling treatment and recovery services;

(i) Two representatives, one from a federally recognized Indian tribe, with experience in problem gambling treatment and recovery services;

(j) A member of the public who is impacted by a gambling problem or gambling disorder;

(k) A representative from a licensed gambling business or organization;

(l) A representative from a federally recognized tribal gaming operation, group, or organization; and

(m) Other tribal representatives, state agency representatives, or stakeholder group representatives, at the discretion of the task force, for the purpose of participating in specific topic discussions or subcommittees.

(2) The task force shall engage in the following activities:

(a) Review findings of the problem gambling study completed in 2018-19;

(b) Review existing programs, services, and treatment to address problem gambling and gambling disorders in this state by public, private, and nonprofit entities;

(c) Review existing programs, services, and treatment to address problem gambling and gambling disorders in other states and the federal government;

(d) Make recommendations to the legislature regarding:

(i) Whether additional research and study is needed on prevalence of problem gambling and gambling disorder in the state;

(ii) Whether this state should expand state funding for prevention, treatment, and recovery services to address the need for these programs;

(iii) Whether the current delivery of state licensing and certification of problem gambling providers meets the current and projected future demand for services;

(e) Identify additional problem gambling areas for consideration and any actions needed to ensure the state and/or regulatory agencies are effectively addressing problem gambling in an attempt to reduce the number of persons impacted by this disorder.

(3) Staff support for the task force must be provided by the senate committee services and the office of program research.

(4) The task force shall submit a preliminary report of recommendations to the appropriate committees of the legislature by November 1, 2020, and a final report by November 30, 2021.

(5) This section expires November 30, 2022.

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