

# HOUSE BILL ANALYSIS

## HB 1763

**Brief Description:** Creating a program for compulsive gambling education and awareness.

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**Sponsors:** Representatives D. Schmidt, Koster, Wolfe, Grant, Boldt, Fisher, Lantz, Thompson, Chopp, Clements, Reams, Pennington, Radcliff and Cole

Hearing: February 19, 1997

### **BACKGROUND:**

Since 1992, several studies and reports have focused attention on the issue of problem gambling. In 1992, the Senate Commerce & Labor Committee produced a report on compulsive gambling. In 1993, the state Lottery Commission funded a study on problem gambling among adults and adolescents.

In December 1993, the Legislative Task Force on Gambling reported that there are a limited number of mental health professionals in this state who have specific training on the identification and treatment of compulsive gambling. There are no publicly or privately funded inpatient or out patient treatment programs for compulsive gamblers in Washington. Gamblers Anonymous has had a presence in Washington since 1961.

The Washington state affiliate of the National Council on Problem Gambling offers a toll-free help line as well as other services for the problem gambler. The Gambling Commission, the Lottery Commission and the Horse Racing Commission contribute to the annual support of the state council's operations. At least three-quarters of the tribes operating casinos in Washington have made some contribution to the Council.

All revenue from the sale of tickets and shares for the various lottery games and all other revenue is deposited into the state lottery account. Moneys in this account must be used for the payment of prizes (a minimum of 45 percent), operation and maintenance of the lottery, the purchase and promotion of lottery games, and the payment of agent compensation. A portion of the moneys in this account is deposited in the state general fund. An obsolete reference to deposits from the lottery account to the Housing Trust Fund remains in statute.

### **SUMMARY OF BILL:**

The Washington State Gambling Commission is directed to implement a program on the

prevention of and education on compulsive gambling.

Expenditures are authorized from the state lottery account as part of the lottery advertising budget for a program on prevention of and education on compulsive gambling.

Reference to deposits from the Lottery Account to the Housing Trust Fund is deleted.

**APPROPRIATION:** One hundred and fifty thousand dollars is appropriated from the state lottery account to the Gambling Commission.

**RULES AUTHORITY:** The bill does not contain provisions addressing the rule-making powers of an agency.

**FISCAL NOTE:** Requested on February 17, 1997.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.