

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2080

As Reported By House Committee On:
Commerce & Labor

Title: An act relating to disclosures regarding problem gambling.

Brief Description: Concerning problem gambling.

Sponsors: Representatives McIntire, Lisk, McMorris, Hurst, Clements, B. Chandler, Conway and Wood.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Commerce & Labor: 2/22/99, 2/25/99 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires that a warning statement be placed in all advertising and promotion of gambling activity conducted by gambling licensees and the state Lottery Commission.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE & LABOR

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives Clements, Republican Co-Chair; Conway, Democratic Co-Chair; B. Chandler, Republican Vice Chair; Wood, Democratic Vice Chair; Hurst; Lisk; McIntire and McMorris.

Staff: Pam Madson (786-7166).

Background:

In 1993, the state Lottery Commission funded a study on problem gambling among adults and adolescents in Washington state. The study serves as a benchmark for comparison with future studies and will be updated in 1999.

The Gambling Commission, the Lottery Commission and the Horse Racing Commission are directed to develop and display, through their licensees and retail outlets, informational material on problem gambling. These agencies also contribute

to the annual support of the State Council on Problem Gambling and the operation of a hotline.

There is no requirement that any disclosure or warning statement be placed in any promotional material or advertising of gambling activities conducted in this state to the effect that such activity may result in problem or pathological gambling.

Summary of Bill:

Gambling licensees and the Lottery Commission must include the following statement in any advertising or promotion of gambling activity conducted by the licensees or by the Lottery Commission:

"CAUTION: Participation in gambling activity may result in pathological gambling behavior causing emotional and financial harm. For help, call 1-800-547-6133."

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: This bill is a response to testimony on bills dealing with problem gambling. Recent reports indicate that a problem gambler costs society about \$3,000 in terms of costs for employees who lose their jobs and the employer's cost in hiring and training replacement workers. This bill is a preventive measure. It allows families and friends to find help for a problem gambler. This cautionary statement should be used by all those in the gambling industry.

Testimony Against: The Lottery Commission operates a business and as a business is directed to produce revenue for the state and various sports stadiums. Though the commission supports efforts to help problem gamblers and does participate through support of the problem gamblers' hot-line and the gambling prevalence studies, a better way to spend money on this effort is to target spending on the types of approaches being used now.

Testified: (In favor) Representative McIntire, prime sponsor; and Mike Transue, Washington Restaurant Association.

(Neutral) Delores Chiechi Whitmore, Recreational Gaming Association.

(Opposed) Bob Benson, Washington State Lottery Commission.