



OREGON COUNCIL on PROBLEM GAMBLING

Jeff Barker, Chair
Vice-Chair Greg Barreto
Vice-Chair Janelle Bynum
House Committee on Business and Labor
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court Street NE Salem, OR 97301

February 12, 2020

RE: Support of HB 4153

Dear Chair Barker, Vice-Chair Barreto, Vice-Chair Bynum and Members of the Committee:

I am the Executive Director of the Oregon Council on Problem Gambling, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to promoting the health of Oregonians by supporting efforts to minimize gambling-related harm. I would like to provide support today to HB 4153.

Research has repeatedly shown that electronic forms of gambling are those preferred most by those with gambling problems, and that faster speed of play is associated with gambling-related harm (Griffiths, 2008; Meyer et al., 2009; Turner & Horbay, 2004). However, in many conversations about gambling expansion, there is much interest in maximizing revenue with little dialogue about potentially problematic issues such as high-velocity play, immediate availability, and variety of gambling opportunities.

The legal sports and digital wagering landscapes have shifted monumentally in short time, and there is little information to date about public health effects. The precautionary principle in public health contends that the burden of proof for potentially harmful actions by industry or government should be on the assurance of safety and that prevention efforts still be conducted in absence of scientific uncertainty. We are currently in this realm, so I hope that the Committee supports the passage of HB 4153 in its original form as a precaution to pause and take into account of the effects of new forms of gambling on Oregonians before introducing new methods of play.

Thanks very much for your consideration.

Julie Hynes
Executive Director
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