

106TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. CON. RES. 137

Expressing the sense of Congress with regard to the recommendations of the National Gambling Impact Study Commission.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 18, 1999

Mr. ROEMER (for himself, Mr. WOLF, and Mr. LAFALCE) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of Congress with regard to the recommendations of the National Gambling Impact Study Commission.

Whereas the National Gambling Impact Study Commission was established on August 3, 1996, under Public Law 104-169;

Whereas the Commission was charged with the responsibility of conducting a comprehensive legal and factual study of the social and economic impacts of legalized gambling in the United States, including the impacts on communities, social institutions, and individuals, as well as the role of government;

Whereas the Commission officially began its two-year study on June 18, 1997, and released its report and findings on June 18, 1999;

Whereas the Commission found that 5.4 million adult Americans are pathological or problem gamblers and 15.4 million more adult Americans are considered at-risk gamblers with a high potential for becoming problem gamblers, and further reported that 7.9 million adolescent Americans are pathological or problem gamblers;

Whereas the Commission found that gambling disproportionately impacts the most vulnerable Americans—the working poor, the elderly population, and our Nation’s youth;

Whereas the Commission found that the cost of gambling is conservatively estimated at \$6 billion per year, without factoring in the immeasurable, but most devastating, social costs associated with gambling, such as child abuse, suicide, and other destructive impacts of gambling on individuals and families;

Whereas the Commission determined that unregulated growth of the gambling industry is seen as a dangerous course of action;

Whereas the Commission determined that the more Americans are presented with opportunities to gamble, the more concern there is about problem and pathological gambling, and that the social, legal, and financial consequences of pathological gambling addiction are severe;

Whereas the Commission determined that technology is revolutionizing the gambling industry, and that Internet gambling in particular poses serious legal, economic, and social concerns which the Nation is not prepared to deal with;

Whereas the Commission determined that many policymakers have been forced to make decisions about expanding gambling with virtually no credible studies to rely on and, at best, only an assessment of the perceived social impacts;

Whereas the Commission recommended that Congress adopt a general research strategy to build a knowledge of gambling behavior and its consequences on individuals and communities, which would add “gambling components” to existing data sets being collected by Federal agencies and national institutes on related areas;

Whereas the Commission recommended that Congress authorize the National Science Foundation to establish a multidisciplinary research program on the social and economic impacts of legal gambling in the United States, including the benefits associated with legalized gambling as well as its costs;

Whereas the Commission recommended that governors and State legislatures:

- (1) authorize and fund every four years an objective study of the prevalence of problem and pathological gamblers among their State’s residents;

- (2) fund research, public awareness education, prevention and treatment programs for those who are, or are likely to become problem or pathological gamblers among their resident population; and

- (3) as a condition of the granting of a license to operate a gambling facility, or to sell goods or services to a gambling facility, provide full cooperation in any re-

search undertaken by the State needed to fulfill the legislative intent of Federal and State statutory policy;

Whereas the Commission recommended that States with lotteries publicly develop and review model regulations for their lotteries;

Whereas the Commission recommended the funding of educational and prevention programs to help the public recognize that almost all sports gambling is illegal and can have serious consequences;

Whereas the Commission recommended the adoption of enforceable advertising guidelines for the gambling industry, particularly as they relate to youths and low-income neighborhoods;

Whereas the Commission recommended the development of a strategy to prohibit Internet gambling within the United States;

Whereas the Commission recommended that Congress direct the National Institute of Justice to research the effects of gambling on property and crime; and

Whereas the members of the Commission unanimously recommend a “pause” in the growth of gambling, to give governments further time to research and assess the impact of gambling: Now, therefore, be it

- 1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
- 2 *concurring)*, That Congress encourages Federal, State,
- 3 local, and tribal governments to review the findings of the
- 4 National Gambling Impact Study Commission, and to con-
- 5 sider the implementation of its recommendations as an ap-

- 1 appropriate response to the many concerns brought about
- 2 by the rapid acceleration of gambling in our society.

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