

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF <FULL NAME>

<If representing an organization, your title goes here>

<If representing an organization, organization name goes here>

Public Hearing on <Bill #> <Title of Bill>

PUBLIC SAFETY & SECURITY COMMITTEE

(Day of Hearing), (Month & Date of Hearing), 2019

Sen. Bradley, Rep. Verrengia and Members of the Committee: Thank you for the opportunity to testify on (Bill #). On behalf of the <organization you are representing> and approximately 35,000 Connecticut adults suffering from problems with gambling, I would like to submit this testimony for the record.

While most people gamble for entertainment with no negative consequences, there is a small percentage who are addicted, or are at risk of developing a problem. Problem and disordered gambling is a medically recognized behavioral disorder that impacts a significant number of people and results in a significant social cost. According to the National Council on Problem Gambling, 1-3% of Connecticut adults are believed to suffer from disordered gambling*. Problem gambling is also increasing at an alarming rate among our youth, due in part to the increasingly blurred lines between videogaming and gambling.

(Insert personal story – try to be detailed but brief)

We believe the expansion of legalized sports gambling in Connecticut will likely increase gambling participation and problems unless steps are taken to minimize harm:

- Ensure that any expansion of sports gambling includes dedicated funds to prevent and treat gambling addiction.
- Require sports betting operators to implement responsible gaming programs, which include comprehensive employee training, self-exclusion, ability to set limits on time and money spent betting, and specific requirements for the inclusion of help/prevention messages in external marketing.
- Assign a regulatory agency to enforce the regulations and requirements that are enacted.
- Conduct surveys of the prevalence of gambling addiction prior to expansion and at regular periods thereafter to monitor impacts of legalized sports betting and have data that will support evidence-based mitigation efforts.
- Establish a consistent minimum age for sports gambling and related fantasy games.

Funding our existing infrastructure of prevention and treatment will help strengthen the safety net, ensuring the protection of Connecticut residents in the face of increased access from gambling expansion. Thank you for your time.

* Marotta, J., Hynes, J., Ruggle, L., Whyte, K., Scanlan, K., Sheldrup, J., & Dukart, J. (2017). 2016 Survey of Problem Gambling Services in the United States. Boston MA: Association of Problem Gambling Service Administrators.

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<If you are representing an organization, briefly describe what the organization does here>