

**WRITTEN STATEMENT OF DIANA GOODE**  
**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**  
**CONNECTICUT COUNCIL ON PROBLEM GAMBLING**  
**PUBLIC SAFETY & SECURITY COMMITTEE**

**Tuesday, February 26, 2019**

***SB 11 AN ACT CONCERNING THE AUTHORIZATION OF A CASINO GAMING FACILITY IN EAST WINDSOR***

***SB 17 AN ACT AUTHORIZING SPORTS WAGERING, INTERNET GAMBLING AND INTERNET KENO***

***SB 665 AN ACT CONCERNING SPORTS WAGERING***

***HB 7055 AN ACT CREATING THE CONNECTICUT GAMING COMMISSION AND CREATING A COMPETITIVE BIDDING PROCESS FOR A RESORT-CASINO***

Sen. Bradley, Rep. Verrengia and Members of the Committee: Thank you for the opportunity to testify on these bills. My name is Diana Goode, Executive Director of the Connecticut Council on Problem Gambling (CCPG). On behalf of the Connecticut Council on Problem Gambling and approximately 35,000 Connecticut adults suffering from problem gambling, I would like to submit this testimony for the record.

Most people gamble for entertainment with no negative consequences, but 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 surveys, 1-3% of Connecticut adults are believed to suffer from disordered gambling, potentially resulting in crime, bankruptcy, lost productivity and the increased need for social services. Problem gambling is also increasing at an alarming rate among our youth, due in part to the increasingly blurred lines between videogaming and gambling. Funding our existing infrastructure of prevention and treatment is the responsible and ethical response to a public health concern abetted by the legalization and continued expansion of gambling.

We believe the expansion of legalized gambling in Connecticut, be it through additional casinos, sports wagering, or online betting, will likely increase gambling participation and problems unless safeguards are established to minimize harm:

- Ensure that any expansion of 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.

While the CCPG does not advocate for or against gambling, we feel that it is necessary to require reasonable regulations that will protect individuals from addiction issues that are highly likely to be the unintended consequences of expanded legalized gambling.

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The Connecticut Council on Problem Gambling (CCPG) is a non-profit organization focused on preventing problem gambling and helping those who may be impacted. CCPG does not advocate for or against gambling but is committed to working with all stakeholders to help individuals and families dealing with this issue.

CCPG provides Connecticut's only 24-hour Problem Gambling Helpline – offering support via phone, live online chat, and text. We also implement prevention and education programs serving schools, veterans, and at-risk populations.

If you or someone you know has a gambling problem, call the Problem Gambling Helpline at 1-888-789-7777 or visit [www.ccpg.org/chat](http://www.ccpg.org/chat) for confidential help.