

**Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)  
Advisory Committee on Problem Gambling (ACPG) Legislative Workgroup**

**DRAFT Meeting Minutes  
March 30, 2018**

**Location**

Held via teleconference with physical location of 1820 E Sahara Avenue, Suite 208, Las Vegas NV

**Members Present**

Tony Cabot  
Alan Feldman  
Ted Hartwell  
Connie Jones  
Carol O'Hare  
Denise Quirk  
Debra Robinson

**Members Absent**

Judge Cheryl Moss

**Others Present**

Cindy Smith, Gloria Sulhoff, DHHS Office of Community Partnerships and Grants (OCPG)  
Dr. Jeff Marotta, Problem Gambling Solutions

**I. Call to Order, Roll Call and Announcements**

Tony Cabot, Chair of the ACPG's Legislative Workgroup, called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm. Roll call was taken and a quorum was confirmed. There were no announcements.

**II. Public Comment**

None

**III. Approve Minutes of March 16, 2018 Meeting**

There were no comments or corrections to the minutes of the previous meeting.

- Alan Feldman moved to approve the minutes of the March 16, 2018 meeting of the ACPG Legislative Workgroup as presented. The motion was seconded by Carol O'Hare and carried unopposed.

**IV. Discussion on Program Funding**

2019 Legislative Talking Points Document

Mr. Cabot stated this agenda item includes three topics, beginning with finalizing the [Legislative Talking Points](#) document. Dr. Marotta circulated a revision to everyone. It was also sent to Mike Alonso who helped us with lobbying efforts last session efforts for recommendations or improvements from his perspective. He suggested on change, in Section II Item B, adding the statement in red font: "The movement away from the number of slot machines on the floor will continue and the funding for the problem gambling service system will continue to decrease."

The group reviewed the revised document section by section for additional suggestions or changes.

- I. No comments
- II. No comments generally, but the group discussed the edit from Mr. Alonso:
  - Change language from "will continue" to "is expected to continue".
  - "The movement away..." was felt to sound too passive. There is a very clear trend of decreasing usage of slots.

- Add to A: “The formula was established over a decade ago, with the expectation that (the number of) slot machines would increase over time and grow the fund.”
- Reword B: Mr. Feldman composed suggested rewording of IIB and while that was being circulated, the group moved on to the next talking point.

III. No comments

IV. The group discussed the lack of a comparative reference to the \$210,000 figure, and agreed to recommend the full committee consider adding language “to reflect comparisons with appropriate public campaigns for other public health and consumer protection issues in Nevada.” Specific public campaigns mentioned during discussion included drinking and driving, seat belt usage, and water conservation.

V. No comments

VI. (skipped)

VII. Change section header language from “inexpensive” to “efficient”. “Treatment is effective and efficient.”

VIII. Change section header from “Funding for prevention, workforce development, and research is needed” to language derived from Item A: “Funding for all components of the service system is needed. Then still say “The greatest and most cost-effective impacts will be achieved.”

Chart - Everyone thought they had agreed to include both charts. Add the second chart.

IIB The group reviewed the suggested language circulated by Mr. Feldman, to replace the language added by Mr. Alonso. It was suggested this language be added right after “\$1.3 for SFY 2017 and 2018”, deleting the remainder of that sentence.

Mr. Cabot read the change into the record:

“While the problem gambling service system has developed over the past decade, along with gambling treatment demand, funding for that system has decreased from \$1.7 million in 2008 to approximately \$1.3 million for SFY 2017 and 2018 as the result of a general movement away from the number of slot machines on the floor. In recent years, casinos have become less reliant on slot machines on gaming floors. This trend negatively impacts funding for services, as the old funding formula was adopted with the exact opposite trend in mind. As a result, ongoing use of the old formula will continue to produce less available funding for problem gambling services.

Additional comments on the newly proposed language:

- Mr. Feldman stated it is important to make clear that the number of machines is decreasing, and suggested adding “on gaming floors” as opposed to slot machine revenue.
- Ms. O’Hare thought the phrase “less reliant” may be misleading as it is generally believed that a lot of money is made off those machines.
- The group decided to include the actual number of machines, or a percentage, that have decreased between 2008 to today. Following the sentence “funding for that system has decreased from 1.7 in 2008 to 1.3 for SFY17/18 as the result of a general movement away from the number of slot machines on gaming floors.” - ADD “During that same time frame, the number of slot machines reduced from (x) to (y). (Before the sentence that begins “This trend negatively impacts...”.)

- Mr. Cabot located the numbers to include: 177,000 machines in 2008, down to 147,000 for nonrestricted in 2017. Including restricted, the numbers are 198,000 down to 168,000 total statewide, or 32,000 machines.

The group approved the Talking Points document, with all changes as discussed, for submission to the full ACPG committee.

#### “Main Points” One-Page Document

The one-page [Talking Points Summary](#) document was reviewed next. The following comments and changes were agreed on:

- Any changes made to the long document should be reflected in the summary.
- Talking Point II: Change header to: The formula that provides funding for the Revolving Account for the Prevention and Treatment of Problem Gambling is antiquated. To the italicized talking point below the header, add that the formula is based on the number of slots and has seen a dramatic decrease, and as a result no longer can meet demand. Also, keep the talking points we have. Mr. Feldman circulated the revised language.
- Talking Point III: No comments
- Talking Point IV: No comments
- Talking Point V:
  - The “estimated 126,976 Nevada residents” is a highly specific number and should be rounded. Change: “126,976” to “more than 125,000” or “researchers estimate that more than...”
  - “...indirectly affects countless others” is very nonspecific in numbers, particularly in contrast to the 126,976 figure noted. Delete the word “indirectly”.
  - Add: we only have the ability to treat (x) under current funding. Ms. Quirk did not want to open up questioning to
  - Give a sense of the demand and more clearly articulate the gap, not only for treatment services, but across the full spectrum of services needed to make an impact. This requires significant investment of resources.
  - Reference the high-risk subpopulations, including veterans, individuals with other additive or behavioral disorders. Add a third sentence: Gambling disorder also disproportionately affects seniors, military veterans, and persons struggling with or in recovery from mental health or addictive disorders.
  - Make corresponding changes to the four-page Talking Points document.
- Talking Point VI:
  - This point contains only broad generalized notions with no specifics associated with them. It needs to address how treatment saves taxpayer dollars. Other than the costs of the justice system and incarceration, it is difficult to connect “social costs” with taxpayer dollars. There are savings benefits to Nevada businesses and work productivity hours. Other costs include high divorce rates. The point of contention with this talking point was “taxpayer dollars”. When you conceptualize the impact of problem gambling at large, not all of that is taxpayer dollars.
  - “social costs are immeasurable” is not a true statement; they are measured all the time.
  - Delete: “pathological” from header

- Possible change in header language: “Treating” problem gamblers to “Addressing” problem gamblers. “Addressing will reduce the impact...”

In the interest of time, Mr. Cabot put further review of the one-page summary on hold, and moved on to the remaining documents on the agenda for review.

Action Plan: No comments

Proposed Legislative Language: No comments

Returning to the one-page summary, other than Talking Point VII, there were no comments on any other paragraph.

#### Potential Projects Suggested by Strategic Plan

This item was pulled from the agenda and will be brought directly to the full ACPG for discussion.

#### **V. Public Comment**

None

#### **VI. Approve Recommendations to ACPG**

##### Special Projects Utilizing Surplus Funds

Mr. Cabot requested a motion to defer this item to the full ACPG for discussion.

- It was motioned and seconded (unidentified) to defer this item to the full Advisory Committee on Problem Gambling (ACPG) for discussion. The motion carried unopposed.

##### Approve ACPG Legislative Workgroup Action Plan

- Ms. O’Hare moved to approve the [ACPG Legislative Workgroup’s Action Plan](#). Mr. Feldman seconded, and the motion carried.

#### **VII. Approve Bill Draft (Changes to the Funding Formula)**

- Connie Jones moved to approve the [Bill Draft](#). Ms. O’Hare seconded and the motion carried unopposed.

#### **VIII. Schedule Next Meeting**

Mr. Cabot did not see the need to schedule another meeting. If, after the full ACPG meets, there is a need for the workgroup to meet again, one can be scheduled. All were in agreement.

#### **IX. Public Comment**

None

#### **X. Additional Announcements and Adjournment**

Mr. Cabot indicated he would modify the four-page Talking Points document, and that Mr. Feldman and Ms. Quirk would work on the one-page summary to bring it into concurrence with the discussion. Those documents and the action plan will be sent to the full committee.

Ms. O’Hare reminder NCPG May 3 and 4. Registration deadline is April 11.

- There being no further announcements, Ms. O’Hare motioned to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Ted Hartwell, and the meeting adjourned at 3:28 PM.