

***Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling, Inc.'s
Response to the Spectrum Gaming Group's Report
A Call for Legislative Action
November 26, 2013***

Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling, Inc.
901 Douglas Avenue
Altamonte Springs, FL 32741
24-Hour Toll-Free & Confidential HelpLine: 888-ADMIT-IT
www.gamblinghelp.org

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling	2
Introduction	3
Response Purpose	3
Pathological and Disordered Gambling	4
Statewide Prevalence – Florida Specific Research	4
Florida’s 24-Hour Problem Gambling HelpLine Statistics	5
A. <i>HelpLine Call Notes</i>	5
B. <i>HelpLine Contact Data</i>	7
Spectrum Gaming Group Findings and FCCG Response	9
A. <i>The Relationship Between Gaming Industry and State Government</i>	9
Spectrum Findings.....	9
FCCG Response.....	10
B. <i>Proper Planning and Coordination</i>	11
Spectrum Findings.....	11
FCCG Response.....	12
C. <i>Extending Hours of Operation and Breaks in Play</i>	13
Spectrum Findings.....	13
FCCG Response.....	14
D. <i>Expansion of Gambling and Proximity to Venue Impacts</i>	14
Spectrum Findings.....	14
FCCG Response.....	15
E. <i>Problem Gambling and Crime</i>	17
Spectrum Findings.....	17
FCCG Response.....	17
Other Points of Significance	20
Summary	20
Attachments	
<i>Attachment 1 – Florida Specific Research</i>	22
<i>Attachment 2 – FCCG Recommendations</i>	31
<i>Attachment 3 – Media Reports of Florida Specific Problem Gambling Incidents</i>	40

FLORIDA COUNCIL ON COMPULSIVE GAMBLING, INC.

The Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling, Inc. (FCCG) is a not-for-profit 501 (c) (3) educational and advocacy organization whose primary mission is to increase public awareness about problem and compulsive gambling and to help persons adversely affected. Established in 1988, the FCCG is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors, is a State Affiliate Council of the National Council on Problem Gambling, and maintains a neutral stance on the issue of legalized gambling.

The FCCG provides a range of programs and services via funding provided by state government and the Seminole Nation, which include the following:

- Operating Florida's 24-hour confidential and multilingual Problem Gambling HelpLine
- Managing statewide Recovery Path treatment program for problem gambling
- Developing and conducting prevention, education, and outreach programs
- Training medical, mental health and addiction practitioners to assess and treat
- Creating resources for special populations in need of assistance
- Designing and presenting professional training opportunities within diverse arenas
- Assisting gaming operators in establishing responsible gaming programs and protocols
- Providing an Online Forum and Live Chat Program
- Sponsoring and conducting research
- Representing the public before government and other policymaking authorities
- Working with legal, law enforcement and judicial authorities on gambling-related cases
- Overseeing a Speakers Bureau and a Peer Connect program

INTRODUCTION

The rapid expansion of gambling in Florida and the number of gamblers experiencing a range of difficulties related to gambling, and the financial, criminal, legal, and treatment issues that arise when problem (serious) and compulsive (severe) gamblers commit illegal acts, prompts an urgent need to more comprehensively address the link between gambling addiction and its economic and social impacts. The vicious cycle associated with compulsive gambling affects persons from all walks of life, regardless of one's age, gender, education, economic status or background.

Presently, gambling addiction is costing Florida government and taxpayers' money in a variety of forms, directly and indirectly, including but not limited to public and financial assistance, unemployment, homelessness, healthcare, bankruptcy, mental health and addiction services, social service, and criminal justice supports. And, while the criminal justice and prison systems in Florida have investigated and implemented positive strategies, such as drug and mental health courts, to reduce criminal behavior, the options selected have not offered benefits to offenders with gambling problems. Exacerbating matters is that there isn't a protocol in place for determining when a crime, a request for public assistance, medical care, mental health, or other services may be gambling driven.

A series of comprehensive prevalence and related studies have been conducted in the state since 2002, all documenting the need for compulsive gambling prevention, education, outreach and treatment to be put in place if gambling is expanded. This is essential, especially as gambling expansion is considered as a way to offset budgetary shortfalls. Despite this research and ongoing expansion, funding for said programs has actually declined.

- Five gambling participation and problem gambling prevalence studies among adults in the general population (2), youth (1), college students (1), and older adults (1). The most recent prevalence study was a 10-year replication and comparative analysis (*Gambling and Problem Gambling Prevalence among Adults in Florida: A 2011 Replication*, Robert J. Rotunda, Terry L. Schell, University of West Florida, January 2012.)
- Gambling specific research among special populations has also been performed among middle and high school students, adult arrestees and youth incarcerated in state juvenile justice detention centers.

RESPONSE PURPOSE

The purpose of this response is to supplement information furnished to the Florida State Legislature by the Spectrum Gaming Group in its reports, *Gambling Impact Study: Part 1, Section A: Assessment of the Florida Gaming Industry and its Economic Effects*, July 1, 2013; *Part 1, Section B: Assessment of Potential Changes to Florida Gaming Industry and Resulting Economic Effects*; and *Part 2: Statistical Relationships Between Gaming and Economic Variables for Communities*, Prepared for the State of Florida Legislature, October 28, 2013, which representatives may find particularly helpful prior to making a decision on the expansion of gambling.

A secondary but equally important aspect of this paper is to review the role of Florida state government, given its promotion of gambling expansion opportunities to date, as well as its responsibilities as

policymaker and regulator for the gambling industry, and associated impacts. For this reason, the Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling (FCCG) commends the Florida Legislature for requesting a study be completed by the Spectrum Gaming Group regarding the economic and social impacts of gambling expansion in the state, and believes this report offers some meaningful input. However, to date, state government has not adequately addressed several pivotal aspects of the issue, resulting in ongoing voids and challenges in the marketplace. The legislative Committee on Gaming and State Legislature have an opportunity to not just look to other jurisdictions through this process, but rather to clearly set the standard at this time for Florida and others.

Finally, as the Spectrum study delineates that the Florida Legislature provided instructions to “not make recommendations” in any of its reports. (Spectrum 2013, Executive Summary, Parts 1A and 2, page 27), as the state designated advocate on issues related to problem gambling in Florida, the FCCG is providing some additional insight regarding points outlined within the Spectrum reports, and is proposing suggestions and solutions to present and future challenges. Please also note that the FCCG is available to assist the legislative and executive branches, local governments, and the gaming industry on matters pertaining to problem and compulsive gambling in Florida.

PATHOLOGICAL AND DISORDERED GAMBLING

“Pathological gambling” was first classified as a mental health disorder of impulse control by the American Psychiatric Association in 1980. In May 2013, it was redefined as a “gambling disorder” and reclassified as a behavioral addiction under the category of Addiction and Related Disorders. This reclassification also demonstrated the level of similarities, yet clear differentials between compulsive gambling and alcohol/substance abuse.

STATEWIDE PREVALENCE – FLORIDA SPECIFIC RESEARCH

Gambling is anytime a person places money or another item of value at risk on an uncertain outcome. While adults often wager with money, as do persons of all ages, adolescents, young adults, and others, frequently bet for possessions, pride or prestige. Here in Florida, and elsewhere, for the majority of people who participate in gambling, it is viewed as a social activity and form of entertainment that does not negatively impact upon any aspect of their lives, and win or lose they walk away unaffected (i.e. *social gamblers*).

On the other end of the scale are individuals who gamble excessively and become addicted (i.e. compulsive gamblers), harming themselves, their families, their communities, and society. Further, as access to gambling venues increase (whether state promoted or authorized), for thousands of Floridians, gambling presents serious or critical impacts, and millions more are adversely affected by the gamblers’ activities.

According to Florida’s most recent prevalence study, for an estimated 180,000 Floridians and as many as 270,000 residents, or 1.2% of the adult population 18 years of age and older, gambling presents serious to severe difficulties (i.e. *past year problem and pathological gamblers*). In excess of 300,000, or 2.1%, have experienced such challenges at some point during the course of their lives (i.e. *lifetime problem and pathological gamblers*). Presenting equal challenges are that an estimated 700,000 or 4.7% of the state’s adult population, are classified as *past-year at-risk gamblers*, meaning they are currently

experiencing the beginning stages of a gambling problem. (*Gambling and Problem Gambling Prevalence among Adults in Florida: A 2011 Replication*, Rotunda and Schell, University of West Florida, January 2012).

Compounding the problem further is that these statistics do not include the millions of Florida residents adversely affected by the gambler's activities who, like the gambler, suffer from a wide range of financial, emotional and physical difficulties. Documenting this point is research outlined in the FCCG's program for medical doctors, *Diagnosis: Pathological Gambling*. Further, calls from loved ones and concerned others of the gambler to the FCCG's statewide 24-hour Confidential and Multilingual HelpLine (888-ADMIT-IT) reflect significant difficulties ranging from anxiety and depression to family conflict and work related problems.

Please see Attachment 1, which is a synopsis of Florida state specific gambling research conducted for the period of 2002-2012. This synopsis includes information about prevalence studies among adults, adolescents, older adults, and college students. Additional research was performed among middle and high school students, adult arrestees, and youth incarcerated in Florida Department of Juvenile Justice facilities. All of this research, as well as think tanks performed on problem gambling and crime, economic impacts and other prevention education and outreach programming have been independently conducted and funded by state government grants and sponsored by the Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling. (Note: The one exception is that the 10-year replication study was supported via non-government funds.)

FLORIDA'S 24-HOUR PROBLEM GAMBLING HELPLINE STATISTICS

One of the most insightful ways to determine how Floridians are responding to gambling is to examine call data from Florida's statewide 24-Hour Confidential and Multilingual Problem Gambling HelpLine (888-ADMIT-IT), operated by the FCCG.

A. HELPLINE SPECIALIST CALL NOTES

In order to appreciate HelpLine data, in the context of Florida's population, it is important to understand some of the presenting challenges experienced by those seeking help and information from the statewide 24-Hour Problem Gambling HelpLine. The FCCG is offering three examples of recent calls, based upon HelpLine Specialist call notes, providing meaningful insight regarding diverse gambling related impacts experienced by Florida residents.

- Caller is a twice divorced man who is living back home with his mother. He is self-employed and spends 100% of what he is earning on blackjack at two different gambling establishments. He had a crisis last week when he opened up to his mother about his addiction and thereafter self-excluded for life at the racinos he frequents. He was feeling suicidal and was given the suicide hotline number.

The HelpLine Specialist further provided specifics about the FCCG's *A Chance for Change* self-help workbook series program and advised about the organization's statewide treatment program, *Recovery Path*.

The caller seems determined to seek help since his gambling has hurt his entire family and resulted in him contemplating taking his own life, which he assured he wouldn't do.

The caller indicated that he would attend Gamblers Anonymous (GA) and Celebrate Recovery (a faith based self-help program) meetings, and was interested in receiving the FCCG's *A Chance for Change* workbook series for gamblers, and agreed to call back later that day to speak with a HelpLine Peer Connect Specialist. The caller was also provided with the FCCG website and advised to call back if further supports were needed.

- A 42 year old woman called and reported she has been gambling heavily on lottery tickets for several years and was just confronted by her husband because she drained their savings account they worked so hard to build up over the years. She stated that she gambled away \$23,000 in savings that was to go toward their child's college education. While she was in charge of overseeing the account, when the bank statement arrived at the house, her husband happened to be home and opened the mail. Her husband was "beyond upset" and told her to get help or he would be seeking a divorce.

The caller was very nervous and depressed since her husband is not fully aware of the extent of the damages resulting from her gambling. She explained that her husband doesn't know that she sold some of her mother-in-law's jewelry, has written bad checks, and has lost about \$50,000 over the last few years.

She stated that she started gambling about eight years ago because she had been having problems at her previous job and it seemed to relieve her stress. She would stop at the store on her way home and play the scratch off tickets which made her feel better. She changed jobs a few years back but still gambles everyday on the lottery. She admitted that she knows she has had a problem for quite some time but didn't realize how far down she had fallen until her husband confronted her. She feels very depressed and had some suicidal thoughts after her husband left the house. She promised she would not do anything rash, as she loves her son.

The caller was supplied with the suicide hotline number, which she accepted, and expressed her disbelief that she would do something so harmful to her family. Some of the statements made included, "I feel like I have been run over by a truck" and "I am stunned that I did this". She was saddened by the fact that her son would not have a chance to go to a good college because of her actions and noted that she and her husband have always been hard workers but have never made a large salary. She said that the fact that they were able to save so much money was incredible but now it was gone.

The HelpLine Specialist explained that there was counseling available for her and her husband and provided several certified therapists in her area to contact. The caller was further supplied with several GA meeting locations and was told about open meetings that her husband could attend with her. (Note: While most GA meetings are "closed" and only available to the gamblers themselves, "open" meetings may be attended by loved ones and others.) As a Gam-Anon (self-help fellowship for loved ones of compulsive gamblers) meeting was also identified nearby, the caller was provided with specifics so her husband could attend. Additionally, the

caller was supplied with the Women Helping Women website for additional support and was sent the *A Chance for Change* workbooks series for gamblers and loved ones. Finally, the caller set up an appointment for a Peer Connect later the same day for added support and expressed her gratitude for the information provided.

- The caller is having problems playing slots at the various racinos in South Florida. He used to go to the Seminole properties but self-excluded, which he noted really helped. However, now he just frequents the other facilities in the area. He is having relationship issues because of his gambling, as well as experiencing difficulty with his finances. He has lost several million dollars since he started gambling and owes about \$500,000 to family, friends and the Internal Revenue Service. He has sold or pawned items to gamble, is behind on all his bills, and lost the majority of his savings.

The caller outlined problems with his employer resulting from the fact that he used the company credit card to gamble, and while not subject to legal action, he was suspended from using the card and required to pay the company back. He stated that he is in the health care field, has tried GA meetings before and is very willing to go again, but stated he would also like some kind of counseling for himself and his wife. He said he does suffer from anxiety and has been told by multiple doctors that they can tell right away that he is a very anxious person. To date, he has not been prescribed medication for this purpose, does not suffer from depression or suicidal thoughts, and also noted that his entire family gambles.

The Helpline Specialist offered specifics regarding the self-help groups of GA and Celebrate Recovery, suggested self-excluding at the other facilities (being sure to bring a trusted friend or family member with him to these establishments), and advised about STEP, certified treatment professionals, and financial counseling.

B. HELPLINE CONTACT DATA

Given the most recent fiscal year data, 2012-2013, the FCCG Helpline responded to an increased number of contacts from residents seeking help and information (4,239).

Note: As Helpline data is self-reported, the following information is conservative in nature:

- While 48% of the contacts were female, confirming a near split among gender, in 61% of the cases reported, the gambler was identified as male. However, when examining the gender among older adults specifically, this was the only age group (55+) where females accounted for a considerably higher percentage of gamblers than males (34% vs. 20%).
- The top three forms of gambling creating the most difficulty included slot machines (48%), cards (29%) and lottery games (12%). Lottery games (60%) were also identified as the secondary gambling problem most often identified for those engaged in more than one form of gambling.
- Further documenting that gambling problems affect persons regardless of background, while slightly more than half of the gamblers were Caucasian (53%), 22% were Black/African American, 20% were Latino/Hispanic, 3% were Asian/Pacific Islander, and 2% were Other.

- Problem and compulsive gamblers experience a variety of negative consequences, ranging from emotional and family conflict, to suicidal ideation and attempts. The percentage of individuals having suicidal ideations or attempts increased to 25% during this period from 22% the previous fiscal year. It also increased by 9% from two years ago (16% in 2010-2011).
- In addition, overwhelmingly, more than 80% of the gamblers experienced feelings of anxiety and nearly the same percentage identified depression, as outlined in the following chart:

Difficulties Caused by Gambling*

Type of Difficulty	Respondents
Anxiety	83%
Depression	78%
Suicidal Ideations/Attempts	25%
Family Conflict	70%
Family Neglect	64%
Family Violence	2%
Problems at School	53%
Problems at Work	49%
Difficulty Paying Household Bills	73%
Gambled Away Savings, Equity, Retirement	56%
Sold or Pawned Assets	54%

*Multiple responses permitted

- Of the HelpLine contacts responding to the question about engaging in illegal acts, 35% admitted the gambler financed their gambling addiction by committing such acts, reflecting a 4% increase from the previous fiscal year. While the most common acts committed were fraud (68% - bad checks, forgery, etc.) and larceny/theft (27%), 11% admitted to embezzling money to fund their gambling habit.

In response to whether the gambler was subject to legal action due to gambling, nearly one in four (1 in 4 - 23%) responded in the affirmative, representing a 5% rise from FY 2011-2012. Legal actions ranged from civil (divorce, foreclosure, repossession, lawsuit) to criminal (arrest, jail and probation) and 17% had been arrested and subject to either jail/prison, and/or probation due to gambling related activities.

Again, it is important to note that as HelpLine data is self-reported, percentages are conservative in nature since many callers do not feel comfortable disclosing information relating to illegal acts or crimes committed, and/or personal questions pertaining to their income, money lost and/or debts owed due to gambling.

- Nearly 30% of the gamblers cited an income range of \$25,000 to \$45,000, with 14% earning \$15,000 or less, which for most families, barring the number of children in the household, is below poverty level in the State. The average debt of the gambler was approximately \$68,000.
- Of those responding to the question, nearly 20% acknowledged that the gambler had gone through bankruptcy and an additional 2% had cases pending.

Data gathered from loved ones regarding the difficulties they were experiencing due to their significant other or another person's gambling problem revealed that 86% were anxious, 87% reported family conflict, 57% were depressed, and 25% were having problems at work.

SPECTRUM GAMING GROUP FINDINGS AND FCCG RESPONSES

In 2012, the Florida State Legislature commissioned the Spectrum Gaming Group to conduct a three-part study examining legalized gambling, focusing specifically on the economic impacts and social costs. Spectrum completed Parts 1A, 1B and 2 and submitted its final report in October 2013. (Note: As previously referenced, Attachment 1 provides a brief synopsis of Florida gambling specific research performed over the 10 year period preceding the Spectrum report.)

Since Spectrum was not permitted to furnish recommendations in their report, per the legislative request, as the statewide advocate on problem gambling, the FCCG is providing suggestions and solutions to presenting challenges in the marketplace in good faith. **(Note: While some suggestions pertaining to the points highlighted within the Spectrum study are outlined within the body of this report, for a complete listing of FCCG recommendations, see Attachment 2.)**

A. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STATE GOVERNMENT AND GAMING INDUSTRY

Spectrum Findings:

The following information was retrieved from the Spectrum Gaming Group's reports, "*Gambling Impact Study: Part 1, Section A: Assessment of the Florida Gaming Industry and its Economic Effects*, July 1, 2013; *Part 1, Section B: Assessment of Potential Changes to Florida Gaming Industry and Resulting Economic Effects*; and *Part 2: Statistical Relationships Between Gaming and Economic Variables for Communities*, Prepared for the State of Florida Legislature, October 28, 2013. (Select information is highlighted in **bold** to allow for ease of review.)

- **"The gaming industry is uniquely intertwined with government**, arguably, as much as any other industry, particularly any industry that is dependent on discretionary spending. Government - can legislate gaming into – or out of – existence, which underscores this relationship." (Spectrum 2013, Part 1A, p. 54)
- **"Governments not only authorize legalized gambling, but often grant regional monopolies for operators.** The corollary to that is that operators have a responsibility to operate in the public interest." (Spectrum 2013, Part 1A, page 54)
- **"As gambling expands within the home markets of Florida visitors, as well as within markets that compete for those visits, it will impact the growth of gaming in Florida, as well as the ability of lawmakers to guide that growth."** (Spectrum 2013, Part 1A, page 57)
- **"Among various private industries, gaming is uniquely dependent on the political process for its success and, in many instances, for its very existence.** In Florida, as in other states, this essential connection with government and the political process means that gaming operators and their allied interests have devoted – and will continue to devote – considerable revenues

toward influencing that process.” Gambling expansion opponents will also play a role in that process. (Spectrum 2013, Part 1A, page 58)

- **Gaming will continue to evolve, with or without guidance or planning from public officials.** (Spectrum 2013, Part 1A, page 59)
- “Those whose interests are tied to the status quo are more likely to resist change. That does not mean that the industry will stop changing and evolving. Change will continue whether public officials play a lead role or not...**Based on our research and experience in Florida and elsewhere, gaming will evolve in Florida whether or not the Florida Legislature develops a plan and puts that plan into action.** Absent any plan, however, that evolution would be haphazard and would be far less likely to address or advance any public-policy goals.” (Spectrum 2013, Part 1A, page 60)
- **“Florida’s convoluted gambling laws...have allowed an expansion of gambling to occur that the Legislature may never have intended.** Rulings in recent years by the state’s regulatory authority, the Division of Pari-Mutuel Wagering (“PMW”), have allowed what critics call an “exploitation” of current gambling laws.” (Spectrum 2013, Part 1A, page 60)
- **“...no other private industry – and certainly none in the entertainment or hospitality fields – is as dependent as remaining in the good graces of public officials for its ability to earn a profit, or even for its very existence.** The flip side of that is that no other private industry has the ability to secure such local or regional monopolies. Sometimes, these local monopolies are granted to private interests simply because those interests own a particular piece of land, such as a racetrack.” (Spectrum 2013, Part 1A, page 65)
- **“...steps should be taken to insulate gaming from politics, and to limit the ability of the gaming industry to directly influence the political process.** Over time, regulators and the regulated are likely to grow closer to each other. Left unchecked, a real risk exists that regulators can become cheerleaders for the industry they govern.” (Spectrum 2013, Part 1A, page 206)

FCCG Response:

The FCCG concurs with the aforementioned points presented within the Spectrum Gaming Group’s report and **suggests that the Florida Legislature require that problem and compulsive gambling be addressed as a public health issue overseen by one independent entity at the state level.**

- The FCCG further asserts that **prompt action must be taken to establish such an entity given the scope of existing gambling venues, coupled with the prospective gambling expansion presented within the Spectrum reports.** This will assign one organization with responsibility for gambling related matters, including problem gambling, versus dividing these duties among several state agencies. This will also mitigate existing and longstanding conflicts of interest with the State and Florida Lottery, as both a gaming operator and regulator.
- **For every form of gambling established, including the possibility of the Legislature approving online gambling, this state designated independent authority will regulate and provide ongoing oversight, assuring appropriate protections, protocols and adherence to state criteria.**

As the potential expansion could also include the authorization for all pari-mutuel facilities to offer slot machines, as well as table and other Class III games, here again, regulation and oversight are imperative from a public health perspective. This is also true in the event the Legislature overturns the current prohibition of allowing simulated casino-style gambling at Internet sweepstakes cafes, arcade amusement centers and truck stops. (Note: Internet sweepstakes cafes, permissible until early 2013, had resulted in a significant number of calls to the FCCG 24-hour HelpLine for a consistent period prior to it being legislatively prohibited. (Discussed later in document.)

- See Attachment 2 for complete listing of FCCG recommendations.

B. PROPER PLANNING & COORDINATION

Spectrum Findings:

- **“With proper planning and coordination, the public and private sectors are more likely to identify common goals, and to achieve those goals.”** (Spectrum 2013, Part 1A, page 54)
- **“All jurisdictions are justifiably concerned with the problems associated with underage gambling and problem/compulsive gambling. Statutory schemes attempt to cope with such important public policy concerns.** One such endeavor entails the formation of a self-exclusion list whereby self-proclaimed problem gamblers can voluntarily decide to be excluded from gambling activity. Once a person is placed on the self-exclusion list, the casino operator is obligated to take appropriate measures to enforce the exclusion from gaming activity, including a cessation of direct marketing to the individual. With respect to underage gambling, such activity is generally harshly punished, both as to the underage patron and the casino operator.” (Spectrum 2013, Part 1A, page 193)
- **“Developing, overseeing and monitoring program to address problem gambling, including reviewing responsible-gaming policies and practices, while maintaining and enforcing exclusion lists, including self-exclusion.”** (Spectrum 2013, Part 1A, page 202)
- **“Addressing other critical public policy concerns, such as underage gambling, or casino-related demands on law enforcement and other public services.”** (Spectrum 2013, Part 1A, page 202)
- “Some of these goals noted above may seem to be contradictory. For example, a single licensing jurisdiction would be tasked with developing a positive investment climate while addressing serious policy issues, such as crime and problem gambling. Such seeming contradictions can be best addressed by adhering to what economists refer to as ‘goal congruence,’ a system in which the interests of all stakeholders are parallel.” (Spectrum 2013, Part 1A, page 203)

FCCG Response:

- **Although state government requires certain gambling operators to promote a statewide helpline number, and several industry facilities offer comprehensive responsible gaming**

programs, including self-exclusion options, a significant number of operators provide little to no awareness beyond a 24-hour hotline number.

Furthermore, a host of industry operators offer voluntary self-exclusion programs, which are intended to serve as protective measures that customers choose to opt in when their gambling is out of control. While timelines for self-exclusion vary from location to location (e.g. one year, three year, and lifetime), restrictions, guidelines and penalties also fluctuate significantly. For example, while some operators permit self-excluded patrons to partake in non-gambling activities onsite (e.g. shows, restaurants, etc.), others will have customers arrested for trespassing if found anywhere on the premises. Additionally, policies range within the same corporate structure. Therefore, there are times when an operator with more than one facility will ban self-excluded members from all of their establishments, whereas other organizations will apply the prohibition only to the requested location.

On numerous occasions, there have been times when patrons have been solicited by gaming operators via mail and lured back in to gamble, even though their participation in the facility's self-exclusion program should have precluded such contact. However, in the event of a win during the exclusionary period, the gambler is not entitled to receive any winnings or to recover losses.

Clinically, self-exclusion is a viable option that should be seriously considered for any patron experiencing gambling related difficulties. It is important, however, to be aware that **while facility personnel, in some cases, may advocate one-year self-exclusion bans versus the lifetime exclusion option (when available), the minimum period should be no less than two years due to the high rate of relapse among the problem gambling population within the first 12 months of recovery.**

Another vital point is that operators typically require gamblers to self-exclude in person so it requires this person to be accompanied by a trusted friend or family member. Simply, a family member cannot self-exclude the gambler, except for very rare instances (e.g. medical condition). Therefore, it would be very helpful for state government, and its regulatory authority in particular, to become familiar with facility policies as a means of aiding problem gamblers who may pursue self-exclusion as an initial step in their recovery. **Implementing a comprehensive statewide self-exclusion program would also prove beneficial. (See Attachment 2 for complete listing of FCCG recommendations.)**

- The same is true for underage gamblers in that at some facilities, **minors are not being adequately carded resulting in access to persons under age 21 at racinos and elsewhere.** And, while in some cases gaming facilities permit persons 18 years of age to gamble, because state law requires that gamblers be at least age 21 to play slot machines, this dual age requirement, in effect, enables ready access to several locations by underage persons. And although underage gamblers do not receive money upon winning or recover their losses upon losing (as they were illegally obtained), this too is problematic.

Again, the FCCG acknowledges that **state government has required certain gambling operators to implement responsible gaming programs, including protocols for addressing underage gambling, as well as self-exclusion.** However, these protocols are not consistently monitored

or enforced in all cases. It is also important to note that because all gambling operators are not required to implement such programs, this further compounds problems.

- **It is imperative for the state to heighten oversight of responsible gaming programs implemented at the various facilities** to monitor the aforementioned points, as well as the posting of the HelpLine number, assuring adequate employee training, etc., **since practices vary widely throughout the industry.**

As the state designated organization authorized to assist gambling operators in the establishment of such programming, the FCCG has worked earnestly to build positive relationships with industry members and offers to conduct training at these facilities, including the design of site-specific presentations in response to operator and employee requests. **In some instances, facilities have opted to perform employee training in-house, or to only expose personnel to limited information,** which is also presenting challenges because these facilities are selectively choosing which facts to outline versus providing a body of knowledge to employees and others. Moreover, **in other cases, operators are only training a select group of employees** (e.g. slot floor personnel) which presents additional challenges, **as many gaming floor and management employees are never made aware of their roles and responsibilities pertaining to facility responsible gaming programs.**

Furthermore, in South Florida in particular, **in many instances, employees attending certain training sessions are unable to speak or understand English and although they are present for the presentations, they are not capturing any of the information because it is not being furnished in a language they comprehend.** For this reason, **the FCCG furnishes its presentations in English and Spanish, and has even designed its new employee online training in both languages.** But here again, **despite the fact that this training is provided at no cost, not all state-sanctioned facilities are utilizing.**

- See Attachment 2 for a complete listing of FCCG recommendations, which includes specifics for a comprehensive Responsible Gaming Program.

C. EXTENDING HOURS OF OPERATION AND BREAKS IN PLAY

Spectrum Findings:

- While Spectrum suggests that extending the hours of operation at Broward and Miami Dade pari-mutuel facilities would not present a significant positive revenue impact, its report indicated that “At the same time, we note that **the original rationale in most states for limiting the hours of operation was to give gamblers a break, to ensure that they took a forced respite. We can identify no way to quantify whether such respites are effective.**” (Spectrum 2013, Part 1B, page 435)

FCCG Response:

- It is imperative that the Legislature keep in mind that **an essential time a compulsive gambler can actually consider their actions, behaviors and/or losses is when they are forced to take a**

break in play and step away to contemplate their options. As long as the person stays in action, there is nothing that prompts a problem gambler to consider the consequences or repercussions of their behavior. **This is particularly primary for those gamblers engaging in rapid continuous forms of gambling, which have higher rates of addiction,** such as slot machines and wagering online.

- **In recognizing that extending operational hours is a form of gambling expansion and can have negative impacts on problem gamblers,** it is suggested that if the Legislature decides to proceed, regardless of the projected effects (revenue or otherwise), that **at the very least, the Legislature should require a pop-up message on slot machines and similar forms of gambling, highlighting length of time of play, as well as the 24-hour HelpLine number,** to serve as an ongoing reminder for those patrons who may be experiencing difficulty.
- **See Attachment 2 for complete listing of FCCG recommendations.**

D. GAMBLING EXPANSION AND PROXIMITY TO VENUE IMPACTS

Spectrum Findings:

Prospective areas for the state to examine, as requested for examination by the Florida Legislature, to the Spectrum Gaming Group, take into consideration, as outlined by Spectrum, that Florida is a “major gambling state, with a wide array of options.” (Spectrum 2013, Part 1A, page 57)

The following information was retrieved from the Spectrum report, Part 1A, pages 397-398:

- **“Renewal of the Seminole Tribe’s exclusive authorization to conduct banked card games on Indian lands, as defined in the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act.**
- **“Granting the Seminole Tribe exclusive authorization to offer table games on Indian lands, as defined in the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act.**
- **“Regulating, prohibiting, restricting and/or taxing simulated casino-style gambling at Internet sweepstakes cafes, arcade amusement centers or truck stops.** This scenario was subsequently modified to discuss the implications of the prohibition of these types of casino-style gambling.
- **“Adjusting restrictions on the number and operation of slot machines at pari-mutuel facilities in Miami-Dade and Broward counties.**
- **“Authorizing pari-mutuel facilities in counties other than Miami-Dade and Broward to offer slot machines.**
- **“Authorizing pari-mutuel facilities to conduct table games or other Class III games.**
- **“Authorizing a limited number (two) of casino/resort complexes in Miami-Dade and/or Broward counties.**

- **“Authorizing a limited number (six) of casino/resort complexes throughout the state.**
- **“Authorizing a limited number (two) of casino/resort complexes in Miami-Dade and/or Broward counties and authorizing pari-mutuel facilities in Miami-Dade and Broward counties to conduct table games or other Class III games.”**

In addition, Spectrum noted that:

- **Ultimately, depending upon legislative action regarding expansion options, approximately one-third (23) of all counties in Florida could have at least one casino, versus six counties today, and as many as 20 additional pari-mutuel casinos could exist outside of Miami-Dade and Broward counties.** (Spectrum 2013, Part 1B, page 454)
- **“Ranking as the third largest potential market in the United States, Florida would need to carefully consider the pros and cons of Internet wagering and develop an effective strategy for addressing the issue as more and more states can be expected to pass enabling legislation in the future.”** (Spectrum 2013, Part 1A, page 173)
- **Research is fairly consistent in supporting the position that when gambling opportunities are nearby, gambling-related problems are likely to be evident** (Spectrum 2013, Part 1A, page. 535). **Yet, Spectrum ultimately concluded that researchers arbitrarily select distances and such cutoffs (e.g. 50 miles) are not as straightforward in demonstrating the relationship between gambling exposure, gambling expansion and gambling-related problems** (Spectrum 2013, Part 1B, p. 536).
- Insofar as to the proximity of gambling venues and associated impacts, again, Florida is already exposed to a considerable array of gambling opportunities and access (Spectrum 2013, Part 1A, page 50) and therefore it is unclear how an expansion of gambling availability would affect the prevalence of problem gambling and gambling disorders (Spectrum 2013, Part 1A, pages 240 and Part 1B, page 590). Spectrum suggested that **new gambling venues would be related to a temporary increase in prevalence. However, if such facilities were to be in areas that already have existing gambling venues, then Spectrum asserts the effect could be minimal** (Spectrum 2013, Part 1B, page 590).

FCCG Response:

- **There are many options on the table for the Florida Legislature to consider.** But make no mistake, **these alternatives could result in significant gambling expansion throughout the State, so the use of the word “limited” by Spectrum is a relative term.** (Spectrum 2013, Part 1A, pages 36 and 38)

For example, modifying hours of operation at Broward and Miami-Dade pari-mutuel facilities with slot machines, expanding slots at pari-mutuel facilities, other than in Miami-Dade and Broward, allowing table and Class III games at pari-mutuel facilities, and granting exclusive authorization to the Seminole Tribe to offer table games on Indian land, are all signs of significant expansion. The re-evaluation of Internet cafes is also a matter requiring careful consideration if determined permissible by the Legislature.

- Currently, the Florida Senate Gaming Committee, and ultimately the Florida Legislature will be considering the numerous gambling expansion options analyzed by Spectrum. However, in the interim, **there is considerable research available in Florida and elsewhere, including the most recent 1999 national study, which documents that accessibility to gambling venues results in a rise in gambling participation, problem gambling prevalence, and related impacts.** (*Gambling Impact and Behavior Study, Report to National Gambling Impact Study Commission*, National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago, April 1, 1999 and see Attachment 1 for listing of Florida specific research)

As one very recent example in Florida, following the presence of Internet Cafes and until such time they were prohibited earlier this year, 4% of calls placed to the FCCG Helpline were from persons seeking help due to issues presented by Internet Sweepstakes Centers. This was of particular concern because unlike racinos and some other facilities in Florida, internet cafes were not required to post the 24-hour Helpline number. Therefore, the FCCG suspects that the percentage of people experiencing difficulties was far greater.

- Per well-established research to date, it is the FCCG's contention that **50 miles is a reasonable cutoff as residents are far more likely to travel within an hour to frequent a gambling establishment** or another form of entertainment **versus traveling longer distances. Further demonstrating the relationship between an increase in participation and proximity, while in 2012 nearly 90% of Floridians reported traveling within 50 miles to gamble** (Rotunda and Schell, 2012), **in 2002** (*Gambling and Problem Gambling Prevalence Among Adults in Florida, A Report to the Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling, Inc.*, Nathan Shapira, Mary Ann Ferguson, Kimberly Frost-Pineda, Mark Gold, University of Florida, October 2002), **this rate was only over 50%**. The University of West Florida researchers noted that this clear decrease in distance traveled may be due to the emergence of new gambling outlets in South Florida. (Rotunda and Schell, 2012, page 33)
- And, again, **other prevalence research has also confirmed this finding, as did the most recent national prevalence study which found that the presence of a gambling facility within 50 miles roughly doubles the prevalence of problem and pathological gambling.** (National Opinion Research Center (NORC), 1999, page x)
- **Regardless of whether the Legislature ultimately approves to expand gambling does not negate the fact that increased venues will have an impact on gambling participation and problem gambling prevalence.** This is also the case when reviewing existing funding and program supports for problem gamblers, loved ones and others, given the current gambling construct in the State. Simply, **there are hundreds of thousands of residents currently experiencing serious to severe difficulties, including those adversely affected, who are in need of supports now.** That said, any **additional efforts to expand gambling options, in any form, would need to be accompanied by required provisions to assure appropriate usage of responsible gaming program options, funding and related program supports.**

Note: The FCCG is available to assist the Florida Senate Gaming Committee, State Legislature, gaming industry, and others in devising appropriate strategies in advance of action being taken.

- See Attachment 2 for a complete listing of FCCG recommendations and Attachment 1 for Florida specific research.

E. PROBLEM GAMBLING AND CRIME

Spectrum Findings:

- Spectrum concluded that given the best available evidence, it seems unlikely that the existence of casinos causes an increase in crime rates, properly calculated. Further, **while there may be a relationship between casinos and crime, according to Spectrum, there is a lack of good evidence, as yet, to support such claims** (Spectrum 2013, Part 1A, p. 242).
- “There is solid evidence that disordered gamblers are more likely than non-gamblers to engage in crime. This connection makes intuitive sense. For example, a person who has difficulty controlling his gambling may have to take drastic measures to obtain money to satisfy a gambling habit. A variety of studies that rely on Gamblers Anonymous members confirm that these individuals are more likely to commit crimes... Even when analyzing a sample of people from the general population, the link between gambling behaviors and crime seems to exist...It is difficult to predict whether or not the increased crime committed by disordered gamblers has a meaningful impact on overall crime rates, since disordered gamblers make up such a small portion of the population. Aside from that, as noted above, **results from crime rate studies are inconclusive as a group. Nevertheless, the literature seems to confirm that problem gamblers are more likely to engage in crimes than non-problem gamblers.**” (Spectrum 2013, pages 242-243)

FCCG Response:

- Without question, **independent research conducted in Florida and elsewhere, as well as FCCG HelpLine data** compiled for well over a decade, **has firmly documented the relationship between problem gambling and crime, and in particular, in the Sunshine State.** While Spectrum was provided with Florida based academic studies/independent research completed to date, for the most part this information was not referenced anywhere in the report. However, **the facts are self-evident in Florida** and are as follows:
 - **Across age groups, problem and pathological gamblers are more likely to engage in illegal acts, to consume alcohol, to use drugs, and to experience greater levels of mental health difficulties than non-problem or lower risk gamblers.** (Rotunda and Schell, 2012)
 - **17% of juveniles, ages 11-20, incarcerated in Florida Department of Juvenile Justice residential detention centers are there due to crimes related to gambling. Overall, 46% of those who placed a bet in the year prior to their institutionalization were clinically screened as problem or pathological gamblers.** (*Gambling Education and Prevention Needs Assessment for Juveniles in Residential Detention Centers of the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice, A Report to the Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling*, Drs. Louis Lieberman, Ph.D., John Jay College of Criminal Justice, C.U.N.Y., and Mary Cuadrado, Ph.D., Department of Criminology, University of South Florida at Sarasota, 2002.)

- Utilizing the well-established simple two question Lie-Bet Screen, **among an adult offender arrestee population in Hillsborough County, the prevalence of problem gambling was 17%. However, when examining only arrestees who have gambled within the past year period, 33% were identified as needing further assessment, diagnosis and treatment.** (*Gambling, Problem Gambling, and Criminality in an Arrestee Population, A Report to the Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling*, Drs. Louis Lieberman, Ph.D., Institute for Policy and Economic Development (IPED), University of Texas at El Paso) and John Jay College of Criminal Justice, C.U.N.Y., and Mary Cuadrado, Ph.D., IDED, University of Texas at El Paso, 2002.)

Responding “Yes” to one or both of the following questions on the Lie-Bet Screen indicates the presence of a gambling problem, warranting further exploration:

1. Have you ever felt the need to bet more and more money?
2. Have you ever had to lie to people important to you about how much you gambled?

Further, the Lie-Bet Positive gamblers were found to be more likely to be charged with a felony. It was also suggested that problem gamblers who commit crimes may be different in their “criminal profile” from non-gamblers or recreational gamblers because when gamblers violate the law their motivation for commission of a crime may be based more on desperation due to their needs related to gambling (whether the relationship is perceived or not) rather than other issues.

The large percentage of offenders identified in the study as problem or pathological gamblers in contrast to the much lower percentage found in the Florida general population indicates there is a need to provide intervention for offenders.

In addition, the researchers cautioned that while this study was a calculation of problem gamblers among an offender population in Tampa, there was no reason to assume that these findings in Hillsborough County would be any different if applied to other large urban areas of the state. In fact, the similarity of these findings to those in Las Vegas further supported this contention.

- **In a statewide survey of middle and high school students completed by the Florida Department of Children and Families, the prevalence of gambling among Florida youth was confirmed with startling clarity –56.3% of students in grades 6-12 reported having gambled in the last 12 months and 15% reported arguing about gambling during that same time period.** Equally disconcerting is that **this study**, based only upon two questions inserted within the State of Florida’s Youth and Substance Abuse Survey, **uncovered that middle and high school gamblers were over six (6) times more likely to “carry a gun” at some time within the prior 12 month period, nearly 20% had been suspended from school, 16% had attacked to hurt, 8% had been arrested, 16% had been drunk or high while at school, and 7% sold illegal drugs.** (*Gambling Among Florida Middle and High School Students, A Report to the Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling*, Louis Lieberman, Ph.D., John Jay College of Criminal Justice, University of South Florida Sarasota-Manatee, Hispanic Addictions Studies Program, and Mary Cuadrado, University of South Florida, Hispanic Addictions Studies Program, June 2006.)

Note: **This study** was the first time students were questioned about gambling in Florida's Youth Substance Abuse Survey, which **solidified the need for problem gambling prevention programming in elementary, middle and high schools**, as a natural extension to existing dialogue about tobacco, alcohol and substance use and abuse.

- **35% of all HelpLine callers admit that the gambler has committed illegal acts to fund their gambling addiction.** (*24-Hour Problem Gambling HelpLine Annual Report*, Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling, July 2013)

While the most common acts committed were fraud (bad checks, forgery, etc.) and theft, over 10% of the callers admitted that the gambler had embezzled money to fund their gambling habit.

Note: As previously indicated these figures are self-reported and therefore are conservative in nature.

- As for nationally, **the most recent national prevalence study also confirmed that pathological gamblers had higher arrest and imprisonment rates than their non-problem gambling counterparts.** In particular, **one-third of problem and pathological gamblers reported to have been previously arrested, and 23% of pathological gamblers, and 10% of problem gamblers, acknowledged being incarcerated.** (NORC 1999, page 47)

Similarly, **a 2004 study by the National Institute of Justice explored the link between gambling and crime and found significantly more problem gambling among arrestees than in the general population.** The arrestees had high levels of criminal activity related to pathological gambling. **The percentage of problem gamblers was two to five times higher than in the general population.** Nearly a third of the arrestees who identified as problem gamblers had committed robbery in the last year and 13% had assaulted someone for money. (*Pathological Gambling in Arrestee Populations, Department of Criminal Justice, Final Report Prepared for the National Institute of Justice, U.S. Department of Justice, Richard C. McCorkle, University of Nevada Las Vegas, August 2002.* Retrieved online December 18, 2007, <http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/196677.pdf>, page 40)

- Overall, **while the Spectrum report examines the criminal impacts in other states, the FCCG is urging the Legislature to review Florida specific evidence as these studies, as well as national research performed, clearly confirm that Floridians with serious to severe gambling problems are more likely to engage in illegal behavior**, such as forgery, fraud, embezzlement, and tax violations. In addition, burglary, armed robbery, drug sales, fencing stolen goods, prostitution, shoplifting and extortion are also commonly identified among this population. **(See Attachment 1 for Florida specific research)**

It is imperative that the Legislature keep in mind that characteristic crimes also include leaving children at home or in cars without supervision while gambling, handling or receiving stolen goods, participating in donation and insurance scams, among other unlawful acts. Yet, crime rates over the past decade have not traditionally examined these areas.

- **Several examples of criminal actions and incidents resulting from problem gambling and public accounts in the media, Florida specific, are outlined in Attachment 3.** These stories highlight the impacts of gambling addiction on gamblers, loved ones and others.
- **Many compulsive gamblers do not have prior histories of illegal activities and eventually turn to crime (primarily non-violent in nature) to fund their addiction. When incarcerated, they usually continue their gambling, playing cards for cigarettes, favors, or money, placing sports and horse bets with prison bookies, selling drugs to pay for gambling, and providing services for other inmates to offset gambling debts. Therefore, without identification and intervention approaches, compulsive gamblers committing crimes are likely to return to gambling, as well as illegal activity upon release.**
- **See Attachment 2 for complete listing of FCCG recommendations.**

OTHER POINTS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Spectrum Gaming Group report was limited due to the areas requested for examination by the Florida State Legislature. As such, there are several aspects relating to problem and compulsive gambling that were either not addressed or were reviewed on a very limited basis (e.g. funding for prevention, education, outreach and treatment; gambling addiction courts; and responsible gaming programs and protocols).

In an effort to furnish a thorough picture of Florida specific challenges and needs, the FCCG is providing a separate comprehensive document comprised of recommendations to serve as a guide for the Florida Legislature, the Executive branch of government, gaming operators, and others.

(See Attachment 2 for FCCG Recommendations)

SUMMARY

The Florida State Legislature requested the Spectrum Gaming Group examine the social and economic impacts of gambling and problematic gambling in Florida, in relationship to the expansion of gambling.

This report is a synopsis of the Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling's brief evaluation of the Spectrum report, *Gambling Impact Study: Part 1, Section A: Assessment of the Florida Gaming Industry and its Economic Effects*, July 1, 2013; *Part 1, Section B: Assessment of Potential Changes to Florida Gaming Industry and Resulting Economic Effects*; and *Part 2: Statistical Relationships Between Gaming and Economic Variables for Communities*, Prepared for the State of Florida Legislature, October 28, 2013.

A secondary aspect of this paper is to review the role of Florida state government, given its promotion of gambling expansion opportunities, as well as its responsibilities as policymaker and regulator for the gambling industry, and associated impacts.

To date, state government has not adequately addressed several pivotal aspects of the gambling issue, resulting in ongoing voids and challenges in the marketplace. The Florida Senate Committee on Gaming

and the State Legislature now have an opportunity to not just look to other jurisdictions through this process, but rather to clearly set the standards for Florida and to serve as a national model.

Overall, compulsive (i.e. disordered) gamblers exhibit an uncontrollable impulse to gamble that progressively increases in intensity. The addiction is chronic in nature and has a negative effect on personal, social, and occupational functioning, as well as high co-morbidity rates with substance abuse, mood and other disorders. Compulsive gamblers progress through a spiral of behaviors that necessitate the ability to move, manipulate, or juggle funds and to tighten resources, often leading to the need to make a moral decision. Essentially, all compulsive gamblers, at one point or another, are faced with the constant need for money to fund their gambling habit, and as funds become depleted, the cycle worsens. So, while a “small” crime may initially occur, as resources become more limited, another moral crisis emerges, often resulting in another, larger crime.

Presently, gambling addiction is costing Florida government and taxpayers’ money in a variety of forms, including but not limited to public and financial assistance, unemployment, homelessness, mental health and addiction services, and criminal justice supports, and there isn’t a mechanism in place to determine such costs. Yet, government does not appear to be slowing its proactive efforts to promote and expand gambling as a way to offset budgetary shortfalls, And, in many instances, these new forms of gambling and the sheer number of increased opportunities have caused difficulties for a percentage of the state’s population.

The Florida State Legislature is in a unique position to spearhead the groundwork for the establishment of a statewide and independent authority that could devise consistent regulations, as well as policies and protocols for all gaming operators, while providing oversight, funding, and supports relating to gambling addiction within the framework of a public health model.

The Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling is committed to working with the Florida Legislature, the Executive Branch, local governments, gaming industry operators, and others on issues relating to problem and compulsive gambling and is available to assist in devising an appropriate planning strategy and protocol for implementation.

ATTACHMENT 1 – FLORIDA SPECIFIC RESEARCH

Note: Research performed to date within the State of Florida has been based upon the previous classification of pathological gambling, defined by the American Psychiatric Association, which was conservative in nature. Therefore, in-state statistics presented within this report are likely to be underestimated.

During the past decade, the Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling, Inc. (FCCG), has completed a body of published research and developed a series of programs with state government grants. The FCCG has also responded to thousands of calls to Florida's 24-hour crisis HelpLine (888-ADMIT-IT), operated by the FCCG, from gamblers, loved ones, and others servicing this population (Note: FCCG studies and associated programs created have been funded by state government (with the exception of the 2012 replication study) and publicly available for free.)

Some of the more notable research studies documenting the relationship between problem gambling and social impacts within the State of Florida follow in chronological order.

Gambling and Problem Gambling Prevalence Among Adults in Florida: A 2011 Replication, A Report for the Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling, Robert J. Rotunda, Ph.D., and Terry L. Schell, Ph.D., University of West Florida, January 2012.

- The main goals of this study were to assess the prevalence of lifetime and past year at-risk, problem and pathological gambling rates among Florida adults, ages 18 and older; compare these primary results to the prior prevalence study conducted by the University of Florida in 2002 (*Gambling and Problem Gambling Prevalence Among Adults in Florida, A Report to the Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling, Inc.*, Nathan Shapira, Mary Ann Ferguson, Kimberly Frost-Pineda, Mark Gold, University of Florida, October 2002); identify the forms of gambling creating the most difficulty; and assist the Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling in understanding demographic differences in gambling and problem gambling behaviors so it may more effectively target services for individuals and families negatively impacted.

The study, among 2,500 adults, also examined negative correlates of gambling behaviors and piloted a brief measure of perceived gambling harm.

- The majority of Floridians have participated in some form of gambling in the past year. Of those who gamble, nearly 90% travel 50 miles or less to gamble, a clear decrease in distance traveled from a decade ago, which the researchers concluded may be due to the emergence of new gambling venues in South Florida.
- The overall prevalence of problem or pathological gambling combined in Florida is 2.1% for lifetime occurrence and 1.2% for past year occurrence.
- There are an estimated 180,000 Floridians who are currently diagnosable as problem or pathological gamblers.

- In addition, there are approximately 700,000 at-risk for past year gambling problems, which equates to nearly 5% of the adult population, which is higher than the national at-risk prevalence rate.
- Problem gambling prevalence rates are highest in South Florida and ranked second is South Central Florida.
- High risk problem or pathological gamblers were more likely to participate in virtually every type of gambling compared to those who do not gamble or who gamble socially. The high risk and combined problem and pathological gambling group have very high rates of lifetime lottery, raffle, and casino/racino participation. In fact, 60% of the problem/pathological gamblers prefer a casino or racino. Low risk gamblers were likely to select a broader range of venues as their preferred location.
- Gambling problems and frequency of gambling were associated with substance misuse and other risky behaviors. More specifically, the level of gambling problems was positively associated with tobacco, alcohol and drug use, high-speed driving and lifetime arrest.
- One of the primary recommendations of this study was the need to integrate gambling screening questions into routine clinical and institutional setting (e.g. criminal justice) assessments to help identify and intervene with those needing assistance or harm mitigation. The study noted that this is a particular concern given higher arrestee rates, as well as higher rates of alcohol and marijuana use among the problem gambling population.

Gambling, Problem Gambling, and Criminality in an Arrestee Population, A Report to the Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling, Drs. Louis Lieberman, Ph.D., Institute for Policy and Economic Development (IPED), University of Texas at El Paso) and John Jay College of Criminal Justice, C.U.N.Y., and Mary Cuadrado, Ph.D., IDED, University of Texas at El Paso, 2010.

- This study was a pilot and feasibility study to demonstrate the ability to identify individuals during the initial arraignment step of booking who have gambling problems and who may have become involved in crime related to their gambling problems. The practical implication of this study is that by identifying the problem gamblers within this study, utilizing a short screening instrument at booking, then intervention and diversion at this initial stage may ultimately reduce crime recidivism related to gambling thus reducing later costs to the state.

Data was collected by trained interviewers from the graduate and doctoral programs at the University of South Florida, at the Hillsborough Central Booking Facility in Tampa, Florida among 1,445 arrestees over the course of a 3-month period. Data was collected using the Lie/Bet Questionnaire for 959 arrestees who agreed to volunteer this information (Volunteers), and additional data on the total sample of 1,445 was obtained from the Sheriff's Department public access website regarding data obtained at booking.

Per previous research, two questions were found to be salient as predictors for both pathological and non-problem gamblers. The Lie/Bet Screen was created and validated in 1997 and 1998 (The Lie/Bet Questionnaire for Screening Pathological Gamblers, Psychological Reports, 1988, 80, 83-88, Johnson, E., Hamer, R., Nora, R., Benito, T., Einstein, N., & Engelhart, C). The two questions comprising the Lie/Bet Screen follow:

1. Have you ever felt the need to bet more and more money?
2. Have you ever had to lie to people important to you about how much you gambled?

A “Yes” to one or both questions indicates the need for further assessment.

- The sample, conducted among adult arrestees, ages 18-73, concluded that the estimated total percentage with gambling problems was 17% (Gambling, Problem Gambling, and Criminality in an Arrestee Population, Drs. Louis Lieberman and Mary Cuadrado, June 26, 2010).
 - Upon examining the sub-group of only those who gambled within the past year, 33% of the arrestee population fell into the categories suggesting they may have a problem with gambling, warranting further assessment, diagnosis and treatment gamblers.
 - Persons arrested, as well as those incarcerated, have significantly higher rates of gambling problems than non-problem gamblers
 - 17% of Florida adult arrestees in Tampa, Florida, at the time of arraignment, struggle with gambling related problems. Further, 61% of those scoring positively on the Lie-Bet preliminary screening instrument reported gambling on a daily basis, 56% indicated twice weekly, and 43% noted wagering once a week.
 - Drug (sale and possession) and status (concealed weapon, prostitution, open container, non-reporting of status as sex offender, etc.) crimes are the ones that are significantly correlated with problem gamblers. The researchers reported that this is an interesting finding that may suggest policy and programmatic implications. These are, for the most part crimes that do not appear to have obvious and direct other-person victims.

Whether this suggests different personality types of offenders, with problem gamblers being less of the “criminal types” or whether this may indicate earlier stages of criminal careers, or some other distinguishing and less severe criminal characteristics of these problem gamblers is beyond the scope of this research but certainly raises the question of whether those with drug and gambling problems (often described as co-morbid in the literature) should be assigned to a separate court that specializes in these problems, either a separate gambling court or one that combines gambling and substance abuse.

Moreover, although Florida does not currently utilize a “gambling court,” similar to existing drug and mental health courts, evaluations within drug courts confirm that offenders do experience a significantly reduced recidivism rate. Documenting this point is the experience of the first gambling court in the United States, located in the Town of Amherst in upstate New York, which confirms that the cost of a gambling court is only one sixth of the amount of money required to keep someone in jail.

- Lie/Bet Positives and other gamblers are more likely to have been arrested on felony charges than non-gamblers.
- The large percentage of offenders identified in the study as problem or pathological gamblers in contrast to the much lower percentage found in the 2001 Florida general population (the first prevalence study) indicates there is a need to provide intervention for offenders.

- The percentage of persons who answered either or both Lie/Bet questions positively and may be considered to have a gambling problem was 17.4%. If applied to the total number of bookings (60,183) during 2009 at the Hillsborough County Jail then it is estimated that the total number of arrestees with gambling problems at the time of arraignment was 10,472 during that one full year. (Note: The researchers reported that this estimate might represent a much smaller calculation than the actual size of the problem gambler population among offenders in Tampa given it is based on a self-report. The FCCG concurs with this conclusion as problem and non-problem gamblers typically do not acknowledge engaging in illegal activities, rendering these numbers conservative in nature.)

It should also be noted that while this is a calculation of the problem gamblers among an offender population in Tampa, research indicates that there is no reason to assume that these findings in Hillsborough County would be any different for any other large urban area throughout Florida.

Gambling and Problem Gambling Prevalence among College Students in Florida, Rina Gupta, Ph.D., Jeffrey Derevensky, Ph.D., McGill University; and Melinda Hess, Ph.D., H. Roy Kaplan, Ph.D., Tom Lang, Heather Scott, Teresa Chavez, and Adrienne Woodley, University of South Florida, July 2008.

- This study, among 2,020 students at seven major universities throughout Florida focused on the gambling behavior of college students. Two-thirds of the respondents were female.
- 5.2% of Florida college students are experiencing significant gambling and gambling-related problems. Overall, 2.7% were identified as problem gamblers and 2.5% are pathological gamblers. Another 14.5% of students are exhibiting one or two gambling-related problems. (Note: Per the new DSM-V criteria, many within the 14.5% would transition from the at-risk to problem gambling stage).
- The top five types of gambling most frequently identified by problem or pathological gamblers were cards (84.3%), lottery tickets (70.3%), land-based casino games (54.5%), professional sports (47.1%), and arcade, computer and video games (44%).
- Approximately 50,000 college students are experiencing some level of gambling related difficulties, over 20,000 of whom are suffering from serious to critical impacts.
- The number of Florida college students classified as pathological gamblers was more than twice that reported for adolescents (1.0%) and four times that of adults.
- Students with gambling problems are more likely to report engaging in a wide variety of anti-social activities including shoplifting (4.5%), taking money or possessions without permission (5.5%), using other peoples ATM cards without their approval (3.5%), other forms of stealing (5.1%), selling drugs (5.6%) or engaging in other illegal acts to support their behavior (e.g., fraud, forgery) with 2.1%. Again, these statistics are conservative in nature as they are based upon respondent self-reports.
- Students experiencing gambling-related difficulties were more likely to report abusing illegal substances (i.e. cocaine) and prescription drugs, have more mental health disorders, and were more

likely to report having relatives with gambling problems. More specifically, 15% of at-risk, problem and pathological gamblers are experiencing anxiety disorders, mood problems (12.2%), alcohol or substance abuse (4.6%), and eating disorders (4.1%).

- Pathological gamblers are significantly more likely than other gamblers to have jeopardized a significant relationship because of gambling (24.4%), compromised a job or career (15.9%) or educational opportunity (15.9%).

Gambling among Florida Middle and High School Students, A Report to the Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling, Drs. Louis Lieberman, Ph.D., John Jay College of Criminal Justice (CUNY) and Hispanic Addictions Studies Program, University of South Florida Sarasota-Manatee, and Mary Cuadrado, Ph.D., Department of Criminology and Hispanic Addictions Studies Program, University of South Florida Sarasota-Manatee, June 2006).

- This report is based upon the 2005 Florida Youth Substance Abuse Survey compiled, analyzed and reported by the Florida Department of Children and Families, in response to the inclusion of two gambling related questions.
- The State's Substance Abuse Survey was conducted among a representative sample of 8,501 middle and high school students throughout the state of Florida. The survey measures the degree to which risk and protective factors exist in the community, family, school, and peer and individual environments.

Upon request of the Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling, two (2) questions relevant to gambling among youth were added to the state survey. These were:

1. How many times during the past year (12 months) have you made a bet of any kind (with money or other personal items)?
 2. Has your betting ever caused arguments between you and friends, family members or others?
- Despite the legal gambling age of 18 years, of the entire sample, 13% among middle and high school students gambled once a month or more and 4% gambled once a week or more frequently.
 - In all categories of drugs, gamblers were more likely than non-gamblers to have used that drug during the past 30 days. In all categories, the higher the gambling risk score, the greater the likelihood of using a drug.
 - High Risk gamblers were four times as likely as non-gamblers to report that it would be very easy to get a gun if they want to (20.2% vs. 5.4%).
 - Gamblers were nearly 6 times as likely to "Carry a Gun" at some time during the past year than were non-gamblers.

- For each Antisocial Behavior, the higher the gambling risk score, the more likely to engage in that antisocial behavior.
- High Risk gamblers were almost four times as likely as non-gamblers to skip school 6 or more days “DURING THE LAST FOUR WEEKS” (9.5% vs. 2.4%). (Emphasis as outlined in report.)

Gambling and Problem Gambling Prevalence Among Seniors in Florida, A Report to the Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling, Rachel Volberg, Ph.D., Gemini Research, with contributions from Dennis McNeilly, Psy.D., Department of Psychiatry, University of Nebraska School of Medicine, April 2003.

- The present study builds on the work of the “National Think Tank on Older Adults and Gambling,” a forum organized and hosted in June 2001 by the Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling. The main goals of the senior prevalence study were to improve methods to identify gambling problems among seniors, assess the prevalence of problem gambling among seniors in Florida, and assist the FCCG in targeting services for senior problem gamblers in Florida.
- 1,260 residents, ages 55 and older, responded to the statewide survey, which revealed that 25% of Florida seniors gambled within the past week, and an additional 40% have wagered within the past year.
- 0.4% can be classified as past-year pathological gamblers - meaning they endorsed five or more of the 10 scored items (DSM-IV criteria) based upon the past 12 month period. Another 0.7% of Florida seniors can be classified as past-year problem gamblers and 3.7% as past-year at-risk gamblers. Of senior problem and pathological gamblers, two-thirds are men, whereas among at-risk gamblers, 43.6% are women.
- More than one-third of all at-risk, as well as among problem and pathological gamblers, reside in South Florida and a similar percentage is revealed among those living in South Central Florida.
- When they gamble at a casino, senior problem gamblers in Florida are significantly more likely than non-problem and at-risk gamblers to report that they usually play slot machines or video games (e.g. video poker). Over half (52%) of senior problem gamblers who had gambled at a casino in the past year said that they usually play slot machines or video games compared with 19% of non-problem gamblers and 24% of at-risk gamblers. Senior problem gamblers are also significantly more likely than non-problem and at-risk gamblers to prefer daily or instant lottery games over Lotto and Powerball.
- Senior problem gamblers are significantly more likely than non-problem or at-risk senior gamblers to consume alcohol once a week or more often and to use non-prescription drugs once a month or more often. They are also significantly more likely than non-problem gamblers to rate their physical health as poor or fair, to have experienced the death of someone close in the past year and to indicate that they have been clinically depressed at some time in their lives.
- The most recent census identified 4.4 million adults in Florida aged 55 and over. Based on the lifetime NODS (a strict conservative screen used in the national prevalence study), there are as few as 14,000 and as many as 56,000 Florida residents aged 55 and over who can be classified as lifetime pathological gamblers. Another 20,000 to 68,000 Florida seniors can be classified as lifetime problem

gamblers and between 284,000 and 415,000 Florida seniors can be classified as lifetime at-risk gamblers.

- Based on the past-year NODS, there are as many as 83,000 Florida seniors who can be classified as past-year problem or pathological gamblers and another 205,000 identified as at-risk.
- Past-year problem gambling prevalence rates are substantially higher among monthly and weekly gamblers than in the senior population as a whole. Prevalence rates are highest among past-year horse, dog and Jai Alai bettors, casino gamblers, those wagering privately and bingo players. (Note: This study was performed prior to the opening of racinos and other venue options in South Florida and elsewhere.)
- More than one-third of the individuals with gambling problems reside in South Florida and another near one-third live in South Central Florida.

Gambling Education and Prevention Needs Assessment for Juveniles in Residential Detention Centers of the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice, A Report to the Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling, Drs. Louis Lieberman, Ph.D., John Jay College of Criminal Justice, C.U.N.Y., and Mary Cuadrado, Ph.D., Department of Criminology, University of South Florida at Sarasota, 2002.

- The purpose of this study was to provide data to the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) in order to help in the decision process of whether to initiate a gambling education and prevention program in their residential facilities.
- Five hundred and sixty-nine (569) youths at 13 sites from Low, Moderate, High and Maximum risk levels were surveyed with an instrument measuring the extent of gambling involvement prior to placement in a DJJ Facility. The sample was statistically representative of the residential facilities on risk level and sex. The instrument consisted of a modification of the South Oaks Gambling Screen Revised for Adolescents (SOGS-RA) as well as additional items more closely associated with the DJJ population. The main findings were:
 - 17% of juveniles, ages 11-20, incarcerated in Florida juvenile justice detention centers attribute their institutionalization to gambling.
 - 46% of those who gambling within the 12 month period prior to their incarceration scored four (4) or more on the South Oaks Gambling Screen Revised for Adolescents (SOGS-RA), which would classify them as “problem” or “pathological” gamblers.
 - 51% were identified as in need of some type of gambling intervention services
 - 84% of those who gambled within the 12 month period prior to their incarceration cited at least one negative consequence from a list in the South Oaks Gambling Screen, Revised for Adolescents (SOGS-RA).
 - *
 - 9% said they had been arrested or detained at least once because of gambling.

Gambling and Problem Gambling Prevalence Among Adolescents in Florida, A Report to the Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling, Inc., Nathan Shapira, Mary Ann Ferguson, Kimberly Frost-Pineda, Mark Gold, University of Florida, December 2002.

- A large sample of 1,051 Florida adolescents, interviewed with parent/legal guardian consent, were asked about participation in various gambling activities, financial indebtedness, problems related to gambling, alcohol and drug use, mental health and demographic information.
- This report presents the results of the first statewide survey in Florida to evaluate adolescent gambling participation and the prevalence of problem and pathological gambling in the State. The main purpose of this study is to examine the prevalence of gambling-related problems among adolescents 13 to 17 years of age, within the State of Florida. A secondary purpose is to identify the types of gambling causing the greatest difficulties for adolescents in the State and distinguishing characteristics among subpopulations within the State, such as by gender, ethnicity/race, and religion. Additional objectives include comparing Florida's findings with national and state data and identifying other areas of interest related to problem gambling.
- The study's findings are intended to serve as a guide in the development of prevention, education, outreach, research, training and treatment related activities and to stand as a baseline over time in which the State can examine the ongoing relationship and associated impacts of gambling among adolescents in Florida.
 - Though gambling is illegal in Florida for persons under the age of 18, lifetime participation in gambling was almost 70% among Florida residents, ages 13 to 17.
 - More than 40% of adolescents report gambling in the past year, 11.5% of adolescents are weekly gamblers, 13.2% are infrequent gamblers and slightly more than 30% report having never gambled. Despite restrictions, 18.5% of adolescents report purchasing lottery tickets in their lifetime and 12.5% within the last year.
 - Although the mean age for gambling initiation was 12.5 years across all age categories, when comparing younger gamblers with the age in which they started gambling, adolescents age 13 reported first gambling on average before 10 years of age, whereas those ages 16 or 17 years started at almost 13 and 13.5 years of age respectively.
 - On the American Psychiatric Association's DSM-IV scale, Florida has a larger percentage of adolescent problem and pathological gamblers (3.8%) than reported in the national study (between 1.5% and 3%).
 - When evaluating Florida adolescents who are currently either pathological, problem, at risk or low risk gamblers (as measured by the DSM-IV criteria), the following results were observed:
 - 3.8% or 37,355 Florida adolescents are problem or pathological gamblers.
 - 5.9% of Florida adolescent males are problem or pathological gamblers vs. 1.6% or 8,053 females.
 - 8.2% or 80,608 Florida adolescents are at-risk gamblers.

- Florida 17 year olds also are most likely to be pathological gamblers.
- Illicit behavior among adolescents such as alcohol, marijuana, tranquilizer, crack or cocaine and other stimulant use, as well as tobacco usage, have strong association among adolescents scoring as past year problem gamblers.

Adolescent problem gamblers have much higher rates of alcohol, drug and tobacco usage than reported by teens in any other gambler classification. For example, on days adolescents drink, adolescent problem gamblers report drinking more alcoholic beverages (about 7) than low risk gamblers (approximately 3) and have over five times as many days of tobacco and marijuana use as their low-risk peers.

- Adolescent at-risk, problem and pathological gamblers are more likely to describe family worrying or complaining about gambling, as well as gambling creating problems between them and their family or friends. These gamblers also described getting into trouble at school or work due to gambling.
- Adolescent males and females have important mental health differences. Males are more likely to have been personally treated for an alcohol or drug problem (4.5% vs. 0.7%). However, females are more likely to be often or sometimes anxious, worried or upset in the past month; have fair or poor health in the past year; and have had two weeks or more of depression or loss of interests. Females are also more likely to report alcohol or substance abuse in the family (12.8% vs. 8.1%) than their male counterparts.
- Higher percentages of problem adolescent gamblers report they have a parent who has/had a gambling problem than at-risk gamblers.
- At-risk/problem adolescent gamblers are more likely to have sold personal or family property, stolen other things, bought or sold stolen property or borrowed money from friends/acquaintances without their knowing in order to obtain money to gamble or to pay off gambling debts.
- Problem and at-risk adolescent gamblers are most likely to be nervous about the amount of money they gamble.
- Although lower than adults, a sizeable minority of adolescents reported buying lottery tickets (18.5%). When gambling on lottery games, adolescents are more likely than adults to purchase scratch-offs. Adults are more likely to purchase lotto tickets, Cash 3, Play 4 and Fantasy 5.
- The top three forms of gambling participated in by problem/pathological adolescent gamblers significantly more than low risk/at risk gamblers are games of skill; sporting events; and cards, dice, or dominoes not at a casino.

ATTACHMENT 2 – FCCG RECOMMENDATIONS

Currently, there are many forms of gambling in Florida, as government offers or allows more distinct licit opportunities to gamble than many other states. Specifically, gambling has expanded widely in Florida within the past decade, in both legal and illegal venues (e.g., sports betting, online wagering), including the presence of slot machines at pari-mutuels in designated locations, the opening of no limit poker rooms, Class III gambling at tribal owned casinos, new lottery games, and Internet cafes (which were not State sanctioned and only recently legislatively prohibited).

Overall, the role of government within the gambling equation has grown exponentially, has significantly impacted upon expansion, has resulted in social impacts, and has affected the public's perception of gambling, and associated challenges.

In-state research among adolescents, college age students, adults and senior citizens all confirm that gambling is a problem for a significant percentage of these populations. They also confirm that problem gambling has social and legal consequences and exists in all groups of society, appears in all social strata and socio-economic levels, as well as across race and ethnic groups. The same is true for incarcerated juveniles in Florida, as well as among adult arrestees, in which a significant percentage suffering from gambling problems are engaging in illegal activities.

The Florida State Legislature now has an opportunity, in light of recent research performed and accompanying documentation demonstrating the relationship and impacts of gambling on individuals, families, communities, governments, and society as a whole, to devise a comprehensive protocol for the establishment of a regulatory body, independent of state government, that will monitor and oversee the gaming industry, while considering the impacts of problem gambling as a public health issue worthy of attention.

Recommendation #1: Florida lacks a clear and consistent state policy on gambling that addresses regulatory and public health issues.

Given the configuration of state government, currently Florida does not have a clear and consistent state policy on gambling that addresses regulatory issues, as well as public health issues that arise from problematic gambling.

- Support legislation and other public policy initiatives that recognize gambling as a public health issue and respond to the link between problem gambling and comorbidity, as well as social impacts.
- Design State policy that addresses the regulatory, public health and related aspects of gambling.
- Influence public policy on the requirement for the gambling industry to more formally and consistently address responsible gambling.

- Collect and share utilization of data across State and community-based organizations related to gambling.

**Recommendation #2:
Designate an independent state authority to administer and oversee the gaming industry, including responsibility for problem gambling related issues.**

The Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling (FCCG) has been operating for over 25 years and has served as state government’s designated advocate on issues related to problem gambling prevention, education, treatment, and research for nearly 15 years. To date, the State Legislature has never authorized a Florida governmental agency to address problem gambling from a public health and harm reduction perspective. To date, the two State agencies deemed responsible for oversight and regulatory issues relating to gambling operations in Florida have been the same organizations responsible for monitoring initiatives and industry programming related to problem gambling (i.e. Florida Lottery and the Florida Department of Business & Professional Regulation).

- Assign an independent authority with responsibility for all gaming operations which will mitigate the State’s existing and longstanding conflicts of interest, i.e. the State operating and regulating the Florida Lottery.

Such division will also insulate gaming from politics and will limit the ability of the gaming industry to directly influence the political process.

- Explore the assignment of responsibility for problem gambling as a public health issue, including comprehensive policy analysis related to problem gambling.
- Prompt action is necessary to assure such authority is in place prior to any further expansion.

**Recommendation #3:
Legislatively mandate implementation of a comprehensive responsible gaming program that requires minimum standards, training, disclosures, and oversight.**

Responsible gaming programs by Florida gaming operators vary, as do practices regarding self-exclusion. Presently, not all gambling venues implement responsible gaming programs and in other instances where protocols are established, they often reflect bare minimum provisions which are deficient in providing necessary training to employees, safeguards to protect the patron population, and/or strategies for aiding a person in need of assistance for a gambling problem. And while there are establishments adhering to high standards, the State lacks consistency throughout the industry.

Further, self-exclusion is intended to preclude patrons from returning to a facility for a set period of time, up to a lifetime. However, it is not working effectively throughout the State, lacks uniformity statewide, allows excluded persons to return to prohibited properties because facility employees are not enforcing provisions (which is also a liability for the gaming operator), and requires that these patrons travel to different gambling facilities to self-exclude.

The benefits of implementing a comprehensive Responsible Gaming and Player Protection Program are significant and include but are not limited to the following:

- Acknowledges and demonstrates an organization's awareness that its services could adversely impact upon a percentage of the patron population.
- Reflects a facility's commitment to helping patrons experiencing difficulties due to gambling.
- Increases public awareness of a 24-hour helpline service that provides problem gambling specific information and resource referral options to persons in need of assistance.
- Reduces harm to identified problem gamblers by cutting off certain options and limiting losses.
- Enables designated and trained staff to provide assistance to customers experiencing difficulty through established protocols and dissemination of information.
- Reflects that the company's advertising and marketing focus are not geared toward the gambling population who experience problems.
- Recognizes that problem gamblers are not good for business and their behaviors can publicly taint a facility operator's reputation.
- Internally provides support and employee assistance to facility staff that may be experiencing a gambling problem.
- Establishes protections that will ultimately aid gamblers, their families, the communities in which they live and society as a whole.

A responsible gaming program should be sure to include employees within all of the following areas:

- Operations management
- Human resources and employee assistance
- Customer service
- Security
- Gaming floor operations
- Non-gaming entertainment and services
- Policy development
- Advertising and marketing
- Credit and financial policies
- Alcohol sales
- Customer/community education and awareness
- Corporate communications

RESPONSIBLE GAMING PROGRAM SPECIFICS:

- Legislatively mandate implementation of a comprehensive responsible gaming program that requires minimum standards, assures adequate employee training, conspicuous disclosure of the

statewide helpline, and develops and oversees a statewide self-exclusion registry that reflects the spirit of self-exclusion and serves as a disincentive for patrons to return to a property or to attempt to gamble elsewhere. Such program shall be a requirement for all gambling establishments, including those on Native American lands, if operating in the state of Florida.

- Require the use of standardized employee training for floor, management and ancillary personnel provided by the Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling (which takes into account facility nuances).
- Mandate type size minimums and locations for posting of the statewide 24-Hour HelpLine number within gaming establishments, on facility signage, literature, advertising, and collateral items.

Similarly, the posting of the 24-Hour HelpLine number should appear throughout facilities, at entrances and exits, at cashier windows, and in locations where gamblers and loved ones take breaks in play (e.g. in facility hotel rooms, at restaurants, in restrooms, on telephones, ATMs and elsewhere).

- Require that all slot and other electronic machines provide the HelpLine number on the actual equipment via a sticker or an onscreen pop-up advertisement. This is particularly imperative as among other things, the Legislature will be considering extending hours of play at pari-mutuels and establishing new facilities.
- The FCCG has devised stickers (e.g. sample below) and numerous other collateral items complete with facility logo's and furnishes at no cost to operators. However, facilities are not consistently utilizing across the board.



- Institute a statewide self-exclusion program, overseen by an independent regulatory authority (noted above), that would adequately prohibit self-excluders from visiting any gaming facility during the banned period.

In addition, a statewide exclusion registry would enable excluded gamblers to be banned from frequenting all gaming facilities within Florida and would eliminate their need to self-exclude at multiple establishments, thereby reducing their exposure to triggers and temptations.

- Disallow self-excluded persons from being present anywhere on the excluded premises for the prohibited period.
- Implement standardized forms and terms for self-exclusion that will require a patron to fulfill their self-exclusion period, without an option of lifting the ban. In the case of a lifetime ban, such persons would not resume the right to gamble in a state approved facility.

Note: As things stand, facilities are allowing patrons to remove themselves from the self-exclusion list, rendering these programs meaningless.

- Self-exclusion periods should range from no less than two years, with additional options, such as three years, five years and lifetime.

Note: As the rate of relapse is high among compulsive gamblers within the first 12 months of recovery, the minimum period suggested is two years.

- Require provisions assuring that when a gaming operator owns more than one facility, it is required to automatically place self-excluded patrons on all property lists.
 - Impose fines that will serve as disincentives to gaming operators who allow self-excluded patrons to return and gamble and/or who solicit such persons to revisit the establishment. Moreover, actively investigate cases where patrons are experiencing difficulty self-excluding and enforce strict penalties when operators are found in non-compliance with state requirements.
 - Devise strict protocols requiring documentation of the absence of a gambling problem before allowing a self-excluded person to return to a facility following the banned period.
 - Allocate any winnings from self-excluded persons to a dedicated fund for problem gambling. (See Recommendation #5.)
- Either establish one legal gambling age in Florida, or determine that within a facility with a dual age requirement (e.g. pari-mutuel facility with slot machines – 18 and 21), that the higher age prevail for all gambling games.

Note: This will eliminate illegal access by minors.

- As is true for self-excluded gamblers who return to gamble and win during the banned period, in instances when a minor gains access and experiences a win, all such monies should be allocated to a dedicated fund for problem gambling. (See Recommendation #5) Since gambling has a direct impact on the problem and compulsive gambling population, it is appropriate that these funds be used to assist the very same people that self-exclusion and underage prevention programs were established to protect.
- Require gaming operators to implement breaks in play as they are an essential time when a compulsive gambler can step away from the action and consider their behaviors and circumstances. In recognizing that extending operational hours is a form of gambling expansion

and can have negative impacts on problem gamblers, it is suggested that if the Legislature decides to proceed, regardless of the projected effects (revenue or otherwise), that at the very least, the Legislature require a pop-up message on slot machines and similar forms of gambling, highlighting length of time of play as well as the 24-hour Helpline number, to serve as an ongoing reminder for those patrons who may be experiencing difficulty.

- Thoroughly examine and implement provisions regarding check cashing, credit requirements, ATM limits, advertising, incentives, offers and promotions, alcohol sales, and employee gambling programs.

Recommendation #4:

Require all gaming operators to provide a monthly statement of money spent, lost and won to all patrons participating in frequent players clubs or the like.

Currently, gaming operators are not required to submit information to patrons participating in frequent players clubs detailing the total amount of money wagered, lost and won over the course of a monthly period. However, this information would be extremely beneficial to all patrons, and in particular, compulsive gamblers, who would gain significant insight from receiving such visual notifications, as often they are unaware of the total amount of money spent.

- Require all gaming operators to provide monthly statements of money spent, lost and won to all patrons participating in frequent players clubs or the like.

Recommendation #5:

Legislatively establish a dedicated fund for problem gambling prevention, education, outreach, research and treatment programming.

While Florida State government has and continues to promote gambling expansion, at no time has it ever established a dedicated fund for problem gambling related programming. This is true despite the enabling legislation for pari-mutuel operations with slot machines in Florida, in that money was earmarked for problem gambling programming (i.e. \$250,000 per facility per year = \$2 million). Although the FCCG has won the competitive bidding process each time it has been issued by the Department of Business and Professional Regulation, to date, the State has withheld the full funding each year.

More specifically, existing State funding for this purpose is limited to \$600,000, is substantially reduced from years past, was lowered despite enabling legislative requirements, and provides no support for treatment. In fact, this absence of State funded treatment has necessitated that the FCCG identify another funding source willing to subsidize free treatment in instances when compulsive gamblers or concerned persons lack adequate insurance or haven't an ability to pay. However, as the State has actively promoted and supported gambling expansion to date, it needs to provide adequate supports for those negatively impacted now, whether or not the Legislature chooses to further expand gambling. In addition, considering that the existing revenue stream for treatment is only available as long as the Seminole Compact remains valid, this too is a concern as it is not a permanent dedicated fund.

- Legislatively establish a dedicated fund for problem gambling prevention, education, outreach, research, and treatment programming, based upon a percentage of State revenues generated by Florida based gaming operations. This will resolve existing and longstanding voids within the problem gambling community and result in appropriate widespread awareness and treatment for Florida residents.

**Recommendation #6:
Educate health care professionals and institute programming within medical and academic institutions to assure competency on problem gambling.**

Few substance abuse, mental health, medical, and other health care professionals ask clients about their gambling habits. As a result, the early signs of a gambling problem are overlooked, particularly in conjunction with other addictive, mental health or medical conditions. So, while nearly all patients presenting in medical facilities, drug and alcohol treatment programs, mental health facilities, emergency rooms, and elsewhere are subject to screening for tobacco, alcohol and other substances, they are not preliminarily screened for gambling. Yet, more than one-third of compulsive gamblers in treatment experience other addictive or mental health disorders, and a significant percentage suffer from an array of medical conditions.

- Educate a broad array of existing health care professionals and institute programming within medical universities and other academic institutions to assure awareness and competency to systematically assess for gambling related difficulties.

**Recommendation #7:
Require health insurance providers to furnish insurance coverage for problem gambling diagnoses.**

Currently, private and managed care providers do not furnish appropriate, consistent and/or comprehensive insurance coverage for gambling disorder diagnoses in problem gamblers or for those adversely affected. These providers also do not facilitate treatment for problem gambling for persons presenting with co-morbid psychiatric illnesses.

- As the American Psychiatric Association's criteria for disordered gambling has been reclassified as a behavioral disorder (i.e. DSM-V-Addiction and Related Disorders), and insurance companies have provided long-standing coverage for persons suffering from alcohol and substance abuse difficulties, it is time the Legislature assures the same protections for compulsive gamblers and loved ones, and prohibits ongoing exclusions.

Recommendations continue on next page.

Recommendation #8:
Devise a protocol that identifies and assists those with gambling problems at all levels within law enforcement and the criminal justice system.

Problem gamblers in Florida do not currently have access to therapeutic justice as is the case for those experiencing substance abuse, mental health and domestic violence difficulties. In particular, Florida does not currently have a system that identifies those with gambling problems at all levels within law enforcement and the criminal justice system. As a result, problem gamblers are not identified nor are the protocols for sentencing, release or reintegration into communities considering the nuances directly impacting this population and/or the potential ramifications to families, communities and the State as a whole.

Incarceration for pathological gamblers in many instances can exacerbate a gambling addiction, since gambling occurs within the prison community among inmates (e.g., for money, commissary goods, favors, etc.). However, if states are not going to use a gambling court system, law enforcement, judicial, and correctional authorities should establish an infrastructure that will provide the education, treatment and support necessary to aid gamblers in abstaining from gambling. They will also need to address gambling behaviors that occur within detention centers, jails, and prisons, so as to avoid a revolving door effect. Such steps would require the implementation of early screening, in-house Gamblers Anonymous meetings, and professional treatment.

- Develop screening mechanisms to identify problem gambling at appropriate points, from the initial investigation through arrest, booking to arraignment, and trial and sentencing.
- Train law enforcement personnel, defense and prosecuting attorneys, and Judges on screening, identifying and responding to problem gamblers, both in traditional and therapeutic justice settings. (The FCCG's *A Chance for Change Program: A Guide for Legal, Criminal Justice and Court Professionals*, funded by Florida State government, has already been developed.)
- Encourage existing drug, mental health and domestic violence courts to screen current participants for problem gambling and establish a process for those who screen positive.
- Develop gambling courts, like the model program in Amherst, New York, in jurisdictions where the level of problem gambling related cases warrant such specialized approach.
- Develop statewide resource networks for Judges and probation officers to support offender access to education and treatment.
- Establish Gamblers Anonymous groups in prisons and jails, and increase the number of certified gambling counselors who are available to work with the criminal justice system.
- Utilize the Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling's existing programs for the juvenile justice population and for the offending population in jails and prisons.

- Build evaluation mechanisms into all programs and expansion efforts. (Even when the FCCG provides free training and programming within criminal justice facilities, and supplies self-help materials for inmates, requests for outcome data by these institutions is not forthcoming.)

Recommendation #9:

Require use of problem gambling prevention programming, as extension to tobacco, alcohol and substance use, abuse, prevention, and treatment.

Public school students are not being exposed to programming related to problem gambling prevention education, despite the findings revealed by the Florida Department of Children and Families' Youth Substance Abuse Survey, which found that more than 50% of students reported gambling in the past year and 15% admitted to having arguments with family or friends due to gambling.

Further, although the Florida Departments of Lottery, Education, Health, Office of Drug Control, Juvenile Justice, and Children and Families have all endorsed and supported the FCCG's comprehensive programming for the public school system, to date, the state has never required implementation.

- Require the use of problem gambling programming as a natural extension to existing dialogue about tobacco, alcohol and substance use, abuse, prevention, and treatment. The FCCG has devised prevention and intervention programming for elementary, secondary and college students.

ATTACHMENT 3 – FLORIDA SPECIFIC MEDIA REPORTS

The purpose of the following media accounts is merely to serve as a demonstration of the type and scope of illegal activities engaged in by problem and compulsive gamblers in Florida:

August 19, 2013

Juvenile center 911 calls: 'It's a full-blown riot out here...everybody's fighting – everybody!'
Orlando Sentinel

Polk County Sheriff's Office officials said three canisters of Cup O' Noodles soup were at stake in a sporting match between youth from St. Petersburg and Orlando. When the losers refused to make good on the bet, a riot erupted. Eight boys were injured — one of which remains hospitalized with a broken leg — and most of the 20 buildings at the Department of Juvenile Justice's Avon Park Youth Academy were turned upside down. The office housing juvenile records was set on fire and the Sheriff's Office estimated the damage on the 37-acre complex to be in the hundreds of thousands of dollars.

<http://touch.orlandosentinel.com/#section/-1/article/p2p-77083582/>

July 29, 2013

Nonprofit health center tries to recover stolen millions
Miami Herald

The Miami Beach Community Health Center sued its former leader in an attempt to recoup \$7 million she plundered from the organization. The center also partially settled a lawsuit against its auditors, claiming they failed to notify the board of directors about the years-long theft. Before she was caught, the director won accolades for leadership of the center, which caters to the poor and uninsured throughout Miami-Dade County. Her reputation changed in 2012, when she was charged with embezzling millions of dollars from the non-profit organization to feed what her lawyer described as a gambling and drug addiction. <http://www.miamiherald.com/2013/07/29/3529918/nonprofit-health-center-tries.html>

July 16, 2013

Police: Surveillance Video Shows Sisters Gambling As Young Kids Wait In Car
CBS Miami

Two South Florida sisters were arrested and faced child neglect charges after authorities say they left their four young children in a car while they gambled inside a casino. According to an arrest report, both are facing four counts of child neglect without great harm after they left four children inside a sweltering hot car outside the Mardi Gras Casino in Hallandale Beach. A woman noticed the children were in the car between 20 and 30 minutes and called 911. After a brief investigation, police discovered the two sisters had gone inside and were gambling and had checked in at the player's club and were playing slots. The Judge ordered the two to stay out of casinos if they post bond, but wavered when asked by prosecutors to order them to have no contact with the children.

"It's inappropriate behavior there's no doubt about it, however, I'm not sure that, there's just a part of me that says it may be going too far to keep them away from the children," stated the Judge.

Note: The FCCG's concern is that the judge did not address the gambling, require screening or seem to be concerned about the likelihood of this recurring. Furthermore, while it is clear what harm could have been brought about if the observant bystander had not noticed and reported the unattended minors, overall the circumstances seem to reflect a lack of understanding.

<http://miami.cbslocal.com/2013/07/16/police-surveillance-video-shows-sisters-gambling-as-young-kids-wait-in-car/>

February 13, 2013

Brooksville woman receives five-year sentence for gambling away in-laws' savings

A Tampa woman pleaded no contest of one count of grand larceny of \$50,000 or more for a person older than 65 resulting from her a gambling problem at the Hard Rock Casino & Hotel. The first-degree felony carries a maximum penalty of 30 years in prison, but prosecutors agreed to a cap of 10 years.

Between the fall of 2008 and the summer 2010, investigators say the woman forged her mother-in-law's name on checks, drained the couple's bank accounts and cashed in a pair of the couple's life insurance policies that totaled \$36,000, and gambled most of the money at the Tampa Hard Rock Casino & Hotel.

<http://www.tampabay.com/news/courts/criminal/woman-receives-five-year-sentence-for-gambling-away-in-laws-savings/1275073>

November 14, 2012

Overdose postpones sentencing for Hernando woman who gambled her in-laws' savings

Tampa Bay Times

The woman who gambled away a half-million dollars of her elderly in-laws' life savings to gamble at the casinos, was found unconscious after overdosing on alcohol and pills, four days before a judge was set her punishment. When asked if the woman tried to commit suicide, her lawyer replied: "I don't know, but it doesn't appear it was accidental." (The woman was ultimately charged with grand larceny from a person older than age 65 and is serving time in prison.)

<http://www.tampabay.com/news/courts/criminal/woman-receives-five-year-sentence-for-gambling-away-in-laws-savings/1275073>

October 30, 2012

South Florida Youth Football Gambling Leads to 9 Arrests

Authorities said Tuesday they uncovered a massive gambling operation targeting youth football games in South Florida, leading them to arrest nine men, including several coaches with extensive criminal backgrounds who they say exploited kids to turn a profit.

The 18-month long investigation started when ESPN journalists brought Broward County Sheriff officials' surveillance video showing parents openly exchanging money in the stands while watching their children's tackle football games. Authorities later uncovered that the stakes on Pee-Wee games were high, with more than \$100,000 wagered on the youth football championship.

Authorities worry that betting on games can lead to violence and other crimes. The gambling bust comes after a Miami youth football coach was arrested that same month for punching a referee in the face during a game. In another South Florida city, a coach followed another coach home and killed his dog in front of him. Lt. Frank Ballante warned that gambling could result in "a human being shot over a

football game...because they lost \$40,000 on that play."

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/10/30/south-florida-youth-footb_n_2044854.html

June 2011

Palm Beach, Florida

Source: Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling

In June 2011, just three days after a Palm Beach, Florida woman threatened to leave her husband while he was undergoing outpatient treatment for a gambling problem, she was bludgeoned, stabbed, and left for dead. Thereafter, her husband drove to Orlando where he committed suicide by overdosing on pills. He left a suicide note, as well as contacted someone to advise where his wife's body could be found. Fortunately, the police arrived just in time before the wife bled to death. (Note: This story was not publicly reported to protect the victim's identity.)

February 23, 2011

Ex-music teacher charged with pawning school instruments

Orlando Sentinel

A former Volusia County music teacher who investigators said confessed to having a gambling problem was arrested on charges of pawning instruments that belong to the University High School in Orange City. The 26 year old teacher was charged with 14 felony counts of dealing in stolen property.

http://articles.orlandosentinel.com/2011-02-23/news/os-music-teacher-pawns-instruments-20110223_1_musical-instruments-pawn-transactions-gambling-problem

October 5, 2010

Man Says Daughters Beat Him Up, Took Wallet and Keys

Ocala StarBanner

Three sisters in Ocala, Florida allegedly roughed up their father inside a hospital and took his wallet and car keys because they say he used their mother's money to gamble instead of paying bills. He told the officer they were angry at him because he had gambled the night before and lost \$1,000 that he had taken from his wife's account. <http://www.ocala.com/article/20101005/ARTICLES/101009860>

February 13, 2009

Trooper Accused of Stealing Cash from Drivers

WFTV.com

An Orange County Florida Highway Patrol trooper pulled over drivers who he believed were illegal immigrants and then took their money and let them go. The trooper got away with it, over and over again, until the Highway Patrol received complaints. That's when the agency set up a sting operation and brought the trooper down. He told authorities he had a drinking and gambling problem.

<http://www.wftv.com/news/news/trooper-accused-of-stealing-cash-from-drivers/nJrRr/>

February 13, 2009

Ex-bookkeeper charged with embezzling \$775,000

Naples News

A 45-year-old former bookkeeper in Naples is being held on nearly \$500,000 bond on charges she embezzled about \$775,000 from Pinnacle Home Builders of Marco Island over a more than two-year period and used the money to pay mortgages, bills and to gamble at a casino. Her prior record involves a 1993 arrest for felony drug possession that ended in a plea to a misdemeanor paraphernalia charge. Further, County records show her two homes on Marco Island foreclosed.

<http://www.naplesnews.com/news/2009/feb/13/ex-bookkeeper-charged-embezzling-775000/>

February 11, 2009

Lakeland Woman Charged with Exploiting Elderly Man

The Ledger

A Lakeland woman faced charges of swindling more than \$1 million she exploited from an elderly man with memory problems. Records also showed a large volume of gambling activity at the Seminole Hard Rock Casino in Tampa, including more than \$2.4 million in bets. (Note: At a subsequent time, the woman's son, age 26, was charged with scheming to defraud, money laundering and 10 counts of grand theft. According to investigators, he also used the money to fuel a gambling addiction.)

<http://www.theledger.com/article/20090211/news/902110218>

January 26, 2009

Accountant Accused of Stealing \$1.6 Million from Law Firm

Tampa Bay Times

An accountant and partner in an accounting firm, stole \$1.6 million to fund an online gambling addiction and horse racing habit. The Clearwater accountant transferred money from his company to personal accounts beginning in 2004 in order to support his gambling addiction. He was responsible for handling the firm's payroll and payroll taxes. Prior to this incident, the accountant had a clean criminal record and public documents indicate that he filed for bankruptcy in 1995 and had been married and divorced three times. (Note: Authorities charged the man, who had been employed with the accounting firm for two decades, with felony grand theft and scheme to defraud.)

<http://www.tampabay.com/news/publicsafety/crime/accountant-accused-of-stealing-16-million-from-law-firm/970775>

January 17, 2009

City aide allegedly stole \$76K in order to gamble

Casino Watch

North Miami's former purchasing director, was arrested on 28 counts of grand theft. Police say she took \$76,000 from the employee's emergency trust fund. She told authorities she had a gambling problem.

http://www.casinowatch.org/this_weeks_news_briefs/news_1-17-09/fl_news_1-17-09.html

November 22, 2008

Homeless Man Admits to Stealing Car in Martin County

TC Palm

A homeless man in Martin County, Florida admitted he stole a car and crashed it on Interstate 95 while on his way to a night at the Palm Beach Kennel Club. The man told deputies he stole the vehicle so he could drive to the Kennel Club for an evening of dog track gambling. He further said he crashed the car while driving south on I-95 and then walked away from the crash without leaving any information.

<http://www.tcpalm.com/news/2008/nov/22/homeless-man-admits-stealing-car-martin-county/>

November 21, 2008

DCF Supervisor Sentenced to 17 Years in Jail

TC Palm

In Fort Lauderdale, Florida, a former supervisor at the state Department of Children & Families (DCF) has been sentenced to 17 years in prison after pleading guilty to stealing more than \$1.5 million from the state welfare system, which was used by her and two friends to gamble. She used the money to purchase two Lexus vehicles and to gamble at local casinos. The former supervisor took advantage of the system of DCF to fraudulently gain access to funds set aside for social services and underprivileged people. <http://www.tcpalm.com/news/2008/nov/21/dcf-supervisor-gets-17-year-sentence-stealing-publ/>

August 20, 2008

Gambling Granny Released from Jail

Sun Sentinel

A Hallandale Beach, Florida grandmother, accused of neglecting two children while she gambled was released from jail. A witness saw the children, a 2-year-old girl and 14-year-old boy, in the car and alerted security at the casino. <http://www.topix.com/forum/city/hallandale-fl/T1JT1M39LD1KLU77R>

October 26, 2007

Former Broward Union Leader Browne's Conviction Upheld

Miami Herald

A federal appellate court upheld the corruption conviction and nearly six-year prison sentence of once Broward County's most powerful labor leader who embezzled funds to feed a gambling addiction.

www.miamiherald.com

July 24, 2007

Grandson arrested for stealing safe with money

ABC Action News

A 22 year old Tampa man was arrested and charged with grand theft for stealing from his 82-year-old grandfather to feed a gambling problem. <http://www.abcactionnews.com/>

November 9, 2006

Former Official Stole \$1.5 Million from Palm Beach County Visitors Bureau

Sun Sentinel

The former controller of the Palm Beach County Convention and Visitors Bureau stole at least \$1.5 million over a three year period and left the tourism agency with a \$750,000 tax liability. According to his attorney, he stole from the bureau to cover for a gambling problem. www.sun-sentinel.com

July 30, 2005

Discarded Papers Lead To Arrest

Sun Sentinel

Deputies say a 17-year old in Fort Lauderdale confessed to killing another teen over a \$25 scratch-off lottery ticket. http://articles.sun-sentinel.com/2005-07-30/news/0507290611_1_juvenile-court-robbery-lottery-ticket