

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA**

Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board  
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# **Gaming Control Board Recognizes Problem Gambling Awareness Month**

**HARRISBURG, PA** The Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board (PGCB) is recognizing March as Problem Gambling Awareness Month in order to promote resources intended to help individuals with a gambling addiction.

The Board has directed its staff to raise awareness of problem gambling and available resources by providing a public booth over several days in the Capitol Mini-Rotunda in Harrisburg:

- Tuesday, March 14<sup>th</sup> from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
- Wednesday, March 22<sup>nd</sup> from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., and
- Thursday, March 30<sup>th</sup> from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Gaming Control Board Executive Director Kevin F. O'Toole says the agency's role in protecting the interests of the public is not limited to making sure casinos are safe and gaming is fair, but to readily provide help to individuals who develop a gambling problem.

"Problem gambling is an issue that can affect Pennsylvanians of any age, race and ethnic background and can have significant societal and economic cost," said O'Toole. "Problem Gambling Awareness Month shines a spotlight on the issue of problem gambling, and we want the public to know help is available 24 hours a day by calling 1-800-GAMBLER."

In 2006, the Board established the Pennsylvania Self-Exclusion Program which permits an individual to request that he or she be banned from entering and gambling at a Pennsylvania casino for one year, five years or a lifetime. While a person is on the Self-Exclusion List, gaming facilities in the Commonwealth must refuse wagers from and deny gaming privileges to that person, and deny check cashing privileges, player club membership, complimentary goods and services, junket participation and other similar privileges and benefits. In addition, the self-excluded individual is informed at the time of

enrollment that they could be charged with criminal trespass if they enter a Pennsylvania casino during their time on the list.

"For some individuals, gambling is not simply a recreational activity, but something uncontrollable that can lead to debilitating problems that create negative consequences for the person, their family and society as a whole," said Elizabeth Lanza, Director of the PGCB's Office of Compulsive and Problem Gambling. "The Self-Exclusion Program is an effective and proven tool to assist an individual with a gambling disorder in removing himself or herself from the temptation of gambling."

More information on problem gambling is accessible through the PGCB's web site, [www.gamingcontrolboard.pa.gov](http://www.gamingcontrolboard.pa.gov). Additional information about problem gambling including how to seek help for yourself or a loved one, can also be found at [www.paproblemgambling.com](http://www.paproblemgambling.com) or by calling 1-800-GAMBLER.

For more information and a list of Problem Gambling Awareness Week activities, go to [www.ncpgambling.org/programs-resources/programs/pgam/](http://www.ncpgambling.org/programs-resources/programs/pgam/).

### **About the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board:**

The Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board is tasked to oversee all aspects of the state's casino industry. There are 10 stand-alone and racetrack casinos in operation, along with the two smaller resort casinos. These facilities collectively employ 18,000 people and annually generate approximately \$1.4 billion in tax revenue from slot machine and table games play. The largest portion of that money is used for property tax reduction to all Pennsylvania homeowners.

Additional information about both the PGCB's regulatory efforts and Pennsylvania's casino gaming industry can be found at [www.gamingcontrolboard.pa.gov](http://www.gamingcontrolboard.pa.gov). You can also follow the agency on Twitter by choosing @PAGamingControl.