

# The POINTS Act

Providing Opportunities for Individuals In  
Need of Treatment & Support Act



NCPG  
National Council on Problem Gambling

## A Federal Response to Gambling Addiction

Nearly 20 million American adults (8%) report experiencing at least one indicator of problematic gambling behavior “many times” in the past year. Gambling disorder is recognized as an addictive disorder in the DSM-5. Yet unlike alcohol or drug addiction, there is no dedicated federal funding for gambling addiction treatment or research, despite estimated annual social costs of \$14 billion.

The POINTS Act would reallocate one-third of the existing federal excise tax on sports wagers (0.25% of handle) to support prevention, treatment, and research. The bill would generate an estimated \$100 million annually without raising or creating new taxes. Federal sports wagering excise tax revenue exceeded \$150 million in FY2024 and is estimated to reach \$300 million in FY2025.

## What the POINTS Act Does



### Recognizes Gambling Addiction in Federal Law

Amends the Public Health Service Act to include gambling addiction alongside other substance use and mental health disorders, consistent with the DSM-5 classification of gambling disorder.



### Establishes a Federal Grant Program

Creates a competitive grant program administered by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) for states, Indian Tribes, and Tribal Organizations.



### Prioritizes High-Risk Populations

Directs funding toward populations at elevated risk of gambling harm, including youth, men, veterans, and Native American communities.



### Supports Prevention Programs

Funds statewide and community-based initiatives that increase public awareness and educate individuals about the risks of gambling.



### Expands Early Intervention

Supports training for healthcare providers and community leaders to implement Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) for gambling-related harm.



### Strengthens Treatment and Recovery Services

Provides funding for outpatient treatment, telehealth services, peer recovery support such as Gamblers Anonymous, and the operation of 24/7 problem gambling helplines.

### REALLOCATES

# 1/3

of the existing federal excise tax on sports wagers to address gambling addiction.

# \$100 MILLION

PER YEAR

Estimated annual funding for prevention, screening, intervention, and treatment of problem gambling.

# NO NEW TAXES

The bill uses existing federal sports betting tax revenue, no new taxes are created.

# Urge Congress to Act

Contact your Member of Congress and ask them to co-sponsor the POINTS Act.

Learn more and show  
your support at

[pointsact.org](https://pointsact.org)

# Problem Gambling

A Growing Public Health Issue



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## What is Problem Gambling?

Problem gambling, sometimes called gambling addiction or gambling disorder, occurs when gambling behavior causes harm to a person or their family and interferes with daily life. Anyone who gambles can be at risk of developing a problem.

**Gambling disorder is recognized by the American Psychiatric Association in the DSM-5 as a clinical behavioral health condition.**

## Problem Gambling in the United States

**\$14 BILLION ANNUALLY**

Untreated problem gambling is estimated to cost the United States through healthcare expenses, bankruptcy, crime, and lost productivity.<sup>3</sup>

**2.5 MILLION**

U.S. adults are estimated to meet the criteria for severe gambling problem in a given year. Another 5-8 Million meet the criteria for mild or moderate gambling problems.<sup>1</sup>

**8% OF AMERICAN ADULTS**

almost 20 million people, reported experiencing at least one indicator of problematic gambling behavior "many times" in the past year.<sup>8</sup>

## The Growing Impact of Problem Gambling

### ✓ Higher-Risk Populations:

Young men, servicemembers and veterans, and Native American communities experience higher rates of gambling problems.<sup>1, 2</sup>

### ✓ Elevated Suicide Risk:

People with gambling problems face up to 15 times higher risk of suicide attempts.<sup>5</sup>

### ✓ Negative Family Impact:

82% of affected families experience harm, including divorce, social isolation, and increased mental health risks for children.<sup>6, 7</sup>

### ✓ Increased Depression:

Individuals with gambling problems experience 3 times higher rates of depression.<sup>9</sup>

### ✓ Co-Occurring Alcohol Use Disorder:

Nearly two-thirds of people with gambling problems also experience an alcohol use disorder.<sup>10</sup>

### ✓ Financial Strain:

1 in 5 individuals with gambling problems ultimately files for bankruptcy.<sup>9</sup>

Addressing gambling addiction requires sustained federal investment in prevention, screening, and treatment to ensure communities across the country have access to the resources they need.

**Learn more about problem gambling at [www.pointsact.org](http://www.pointsact.org)**

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