

MINUTES OF THE SENATE FEDERAL AND STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Senator Nancey Harrington at 10:30 a.m. on February 15, 2001 in Room 245-N of the Capitol.

All members were present.

Committee staff present: Dennis Hodgins, Legislative Research Department
Theresa Kiernan, Office of the Revisor
Nikki Kraus, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee: Donna Doolin, Asst. Director of Substance Abuse Treatment and Recovery, SRS
Robert H. Poresky, PhD, College of Human Ecology, Kansas State University
Gary Winget, President, Kansans For Life At Its Best

Others attending: See Attached List

Chairman Harrington stated that yesterday on the Senate floor she had lost track of an amendment that Theresa Kiernan had given her, but that Theresa had been doing her job very well and that she would like to recognize all of her hard work as Revisor.

Chairman Harrington opened the meeting by recognizing Donna Doolin, Asst. Director of Substance Abuse Treatment and Recovery in the division of healthcare policy, SRS. Ms. Doolin presented testimony which addressed compulsive gambling and programs which are being established by SRS to help deal with it. (Attachment 1). Ms. Doolin presented a pamphlet concerning Compulsive Gambling Treatment Certification Training for social workers. (Attachment 2). Ms. Doolin also presented a memorandum concerning prevalence estimates for the state of Kansas of individuals which are identified as pathological gamblers. (Attachment 3).

In response to questions from Senator Barnett, Ms. Doolin stated that the availability of gambling is going to increase availability for people with gambling problems, and that the figures presented in the study were primarily national.

Chairman Harrington asked Ms. Doolin where the funding was coming from, and she stated that it was \$100,000 total, twenty thousand from bingo taxes and eighty thousand from state gaming revenues. Senator Barnett stated that he was interested in who was going to pay for the treatment of addicted individuals because \$100,000 was not going to pay for any treatment. Ms. Doolin stated that it was good to ask that question and that was why she was making this presentation in front of the Legislature. In response to further questions from Senator Barnett, Ms. Doolin stated that treatment for gambling addiction was hard to gauge in effectiveness because so few outcome studies had been done. She stated that screening for gambling addiction would be done in halfway houses and mental health facilities, but that this was indeed after the fact and more needed to be done in the way of prevention.

Senator Gooch stated that he would like to know from where the expert teachers have been obtained to do the training for gambling addiction counselors, and Ms. Doolin stated that Joanna Frankin, a nationally known figure as the mother of gambling addiction treatment, would be training, among others known nationally such as Rudy Gaza, specialist in elderly addiction, and Chris Anderson. In response to further questions from Senator Gooch, Ms. Doolin stated that the training would be paid for either by the individual seeking the training or an agency, but that all who receive the training must have previous training and certification. Senator Gooch then asked if there were any programs which follow up on helping gambling addicts after their initial treatment; Ms. Doolin stated that there was a gambling treatment program at St. Francis Hospital which was in conjunction with their substance abuse program, and GA, Gamblers Anonymous.

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Senator O'Connor asked if there was a study which compares addictions because she had seen information which indicated that people with one addiction often had another. Ms. Doolin stated that 30-40% of people with alcohol or drug problems also are at high risk for gambling problems.

Chairman Harrington recognized Robert H. Poresky, PhD, College of Human Ecology, Kansas State University, who presented a memorandum entitled, "Gambling Problems in Kansas, 1996 Statewide Survey and Regional Analysis". (Attachment 4).

Dr. Poresky went through the study with the committee and then answered questions from members. In response to questions from Senator Vratil, Dr. Poresky stated that the structure of the questions must ask individuals from whom they borrowed money, as opposed to if they borrowed money.

In response to a question from Senator Barnett, Dr. Poresky stated that to the extent that society says that it is okay or good to do something, the behavior increases, whereas when the parents and society do not do something, kids are less likely to do it. Senator Barnett asked if there were studies to show the effects of gambling in different regions, and Dr. Poresky stated that it would be expected that there would be a great deal of change since 1996 with the influx of gambling availability.

Chairman Harrington stated that she was interested in continuing care for addicted individuals and that it seemed like mental health parity ought to cover something like that under insurance. Ms. Doolin replied that such a form of payment would be great because without funding, most individuals would not be able to pay for treatment, nor facilities to provide it.

Chairman Harrington stated that she heard that in studies, people who put in one dollar and got one dollar back thought that they had won. Dr. Poresky stated that it was amazing to watch people playing slots because they could be losing, yet they continue without paying attention.

Senator Barnett asked Chairman Harrington if it would be possible for the entire committee to request a post audit, and he was advised to work with staff to create a request which would then be reviewed and approved by the committee.

Senator Barnett stated that he wanted to go on record as being supportive of Senator Mayan's amendment to **HB 2038—Extension of the Lottery until 2008**, although he was not supportive of gambling.

Senator Gooch stated that there was nothing new about addiction, but that he had always thought about gambling as the dice game Craps, and now it was betting on high school games. He stated that people who have a problem with gambling are now found at the college level.

Dr. Poresky stated that the earlier people start gambling, the bigger problems they have.

Chairman Harrington stated that 12-17 year olds are dreamers who feel that they might win by gambling and then never have to go to school or work. She stated that this way of thinking makes them particularly susceptible to the addiction.

Gary Winget, President, Kansans For Life At Its Best, presented testimony to the committee concerning gambling addiction. He stated that he was an expert on homelessness in the state of Kansas. He stated that about 40% of homeless people have an addictive personality and that it mostly regarded alcohol. He stated that he wanted people to be prevention minded in dealing with gambling addiction. He stated that he was surprised that no one had introduced the 50 mile rule which stated that if there is a casino within that distance of your home, you are far more likely to gamble.

Mr. Winget stated that he is a person from the faith community. He stated that the clergy is often in the front lines of having to deal with addicts, and that those in his community were inept as a whole because of a lack of proper training in how to counsel addicted individuals and their families.

Chairman Harrington stated that the state may want to look at a new joint subcommittee which would address

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the state working with faith-based organizations.

Mr. Winget stated that he would like the state to use his organization and other faith-based groups because they are everywhere and want to be an ally in dealing with these problems.

Chairman Harrington stated that ministers are asked to deal with the ramifications of gambling in their communities.

Chairman Harrington opened the hearing on:

SB 178—An act concerning reports of state agencies

Senator Teichman made a motion that SB 178 be passed favorably to the entire Senate and placed on the consent calendar. Senator Gooch seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Theresa Kiernan stated that regarding the post audit request made by Senator Barnett, the committee must make a written request. Senator Barnett stated that he was more interested in the social costs to the state, and that he believed that the request might bear a little more weight if it were made by the entire committee. Chairman Harrington stated that it was possible that a request made by the committee would be more likely to get something done.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:45 a.m. The next scheduled meeting will be at 10:30 a.m. on January 20, 2001.