



National Problem Gambling Helpline: Call or Text 1-800-GAMBLER or visit 1800gamblerchat.org

**Written Statement of Cole Wogoman
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National Council on Problem Gambling**

**Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs
HP 1339/LD 2080
January 17, 2024**

Dear Chairman Craig Hickman, Chairwoman Laura Supica, and Members of the Committee:

I write on behalf of the National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG), the sole national advocate for problem gamblers and their loved ones, to provide comments of support for HP 1339/LD 2080, which would create a universal self-exclusion list in the state of Maine. NCPG's mission is to lead state and national stakeholders in the development of comprehensive policy and programs for all those affected by problem gambling. Our vision is to improve health and wellness by reducing the personal, social, and economic costs of problem gambling. NCPG is neither for nor against legalized gambling.

NCPG strongly supports HP 1339/LD 2080. Gambling addiction often affects a player by more than one form of gambling. Many players reporting gambling problems gamble in significantly more than one form, sometimes even a dozen or more. Indeed, those who are addicted to one form of gambling, such as sports betting, are at an increased risk of developing an addiction to other forms of gambling, such as slot machines. Given this, NCPG believes HP 1339/LD 2080 would create a beneficial and convenient option for Mainers looking to self-exclude from all forms of gambling.

NCPG also stresses the importance of universal self-exclusion being voluntary, as it is in this bill. Some players are not ready to self-exclude from all forms of gambling, and if that is the only option, they will often choose to forgo self-exclusion altogether—typically to their detriment.

If you have any questions about this testimony, or want additional details or recommendations, please do not hesitate to contact us. I would be happy to answer any and all questions that you may have. Thank you for the opportunity to submit our testimony to the record.