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House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

COMMITTEES

GAMING OVERSIGHT,
REPUBLICAN CHAIRMAN
CAPITOL PRESERVATION,
CHAIRMAN
STATE GOVERNMENT

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125-54-2

March 22, 2007

Paul Resch, Secretary
Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board
P.O. Box 69060
Harrisburg, PA 17106-9060

RE: Proposed Rulemaking #125-54

Dear Mr. Resch:

As Republican chairman of the House Gaming Oversight Committee, I would like to comment on Regulation #125-54, the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board regulations addressing compulsive and problem gambling and self-exclusion. This is a proposed rulemaking currently before IRRC. I have several concerns with these proposed rules.

My first concern is with the definition of a "qualified treatment professional." It has been brought to my attention by the National Association of Social Workers about the quality of treatment provided by a "qualified treatment professional" under this regulation. This definition does not clarify what kind of training this "professional" has to help the compulsive gambler. It is my suggestion to the Board to clarify this definition and consider that qualified treatment professionals are licensed by the Pennsylvania Department of State to provide mental health and behavioral health services and are trained to provide excellent service to our problem gamblers.

I applaud the Board for requiring a slot machine licensee to provide a compulsive and problem gambling plan at the time they submit their application for a license and also for requiring an employee training program. I believe these two concepts are a noble start in addressing the many social problems that have now begun in this great Commonwealth with the introduction of gaming. However, I will be in contact with the Board and the slot machine licensees to ensure these plans are being enacted and followed.

INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

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Another concern I have is with Section 501.6 (Signage Requirements). As a strong supporter of compulsive gambling programs, I would propose that the sign requirements be stricter, such as within 10 feet of each entrance and exit of the facility and within 10 feet of each ATM, cash dispensing or change machine in the facility. I would also suggest that the Board include a requirement with the minimum number of signs to be located in the facility.

The self-exclusion program which the Board has provided for in Chapter 503 is commendable, but I do have some questions on this chapter. First, when a person applies to the Board to be on this list, under this proposed regulation, they are "required to have a photograph taken by the Board, or agent thereof, upon the Board's acceptance of the request to be on the list." Does this mean that the person must come to the Harrisburg office to have this completed? If so, I believe this is burdensome to the compulsive gambler and will deter them from self-excluding.

Finally, from my interpretation of Section 503.6 (Exemptions to the Prohibition from Being on the Gaming Floor for Individuals on the Self-exclusion List) a scenario is set forth in which a self-excluded person may be permitted to enter onto the gaming floor. I say "from my interpretation" because I am assuming that all of the items listed must be followed for a self-excluded person to enter the gaming floor. I would suggest that the Board clarify this section by saying "all of the following" so that there is no room for interpretation of this section.

Thank you for your time and attention as I shared my concerns with you regarding the regulations on compulsive and problem gambling and the self-exclusion.

Sincerely,



PAUL I. CLYMER, Republican Chairman
House Gaming Oversight Committee

PIC/erk

cc: Kim Kaufman, Executive Director
Independent Regulatory Review Commission
The Honorable Harold James, Majority Chairman
House Gaming Oversight Committee
Republican Members of the House Gaming Oversight Committee