

1 [Recognizing Problem Gambling Awareness Month - March]

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3 **Resolution recognizing March as Problem Gambling Awareness Month in the City and**  
4 **County of San Francisco.**

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6 WHEREAS, Gambling, in both legal and illegal forms, is becoming more omnipresent  
7 in our everyday lives, including through casinos and card rooms, lotteries, sports betting,  
8 online gambling, video games, Daily Fantasy Sports, internet casinos, social media games,  
9 and sweepstakes cafes; and

10 WHEREAS, In 2020 despite the pandemic, Americans wagered nearly \$22 billion on  
11 sports, a greater than 50% increase over 2019; and

12 WHEREAS, In 2016 Americans lost nearly \$117 billion at casinos, more than any other  
13 country; and

14 WHEREAS, A 2018 NICOS Chinese Health Coalition study found that 87% of  
15 California's casino bus patrons are “probable problem gamblers;” and

16 WHEREAS, 6 to 8 million Americans, including more than 1.2 million Californians, meet  
17 the criteria for problem gambling and, by their gambling behavior, negatively affect the lives of  
18 another 48 to 80 million individuals; and

19 WHEREAS, Problem gambling is defined as gambling behavior which causes  
20 disruption in any major areas of life: psychological, physical, social, vocational, health,  
21 spiritual or emotional; and

22 WHEREAS, Problem gambling (“gambling disorder”) has been classified recently by  
23 the American Psychiatric Association as an addiction with similarities to the causes and  
24 consequences of alcohol and drug dependence; and

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1           WHEREAS, Behavioral signs of problem gambling include gambling to escape  
2 boredom, pain or loneliness, lying to loved ones to conceal the extent of gambling, needing to  
3 gamble with increasing amounts of money in order to achieve excitement, borrowing money to  
4 gamble, and trying repeatedly over time to win back money lost; and

5           WHEREAS, Americans gamble more money each year than they spend on groceries,  
6 betting upwards of \$900 billion annually; and

7           WHEREAS, Problem gambling is a public health issue impacting relationships,  
8 families, businesses, and communities; and

9           WHEREAS, Populations at high risk for gambling problems include seniors, youth,  
10 college students, veterans, African Americans, Asian Americans, LatinX and Native  
11 Americans; and

12           WHEREAS, The World Health Organization has classified "gaming disorder" as a  
13 mental health condition with behavioral signs mirroring those of gambling disorder; and

14           WHEREAS, Many video games include elements and practices of gambling such as in-  
15 game purchases of loot boxes and token wagering and could possibly condition children and  
16 youth for gambling/ gambling addiction; and

17           WHEREAS, Only 15% of problem gamblers ever seek treatment; and

18           WHEREAS, Numerous free resources, including self-help workbooks, phone-based  
19 counseling, individual counseling, support group counseling, residential care and a locally  
20 based helpline (1-888-968-7888) are now available for problem gamblers and affected  
21 individuals; and

22           WHEREAS, The San Francisco Department of Public Health – Community Behavioral  
23 Health Services (SFDPH–CBHS), in partnership with NICOS Chinese Health Coalition  
24 (NICOS), made the City and County of San Francisco one of the first municipalities in the  
25 nation to offer a problem gambling prevention program to its residents, beginning in 1998; and

1           WHEREAS, The NICOS problem gambling program model has been replicated  
2 nationwide; and

3           WHEREAS, In 2019, the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco  
4 unanimously adopted a resolution declaring the month of March as Problem Gambling  
5 Awareness Month; now, therefore, be it

6           RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco  
7 recognizes the outreach efforts by SFDPH-CBHS and NICOS to communities struggling with  
8 problem gambling; and, be it

9           FURTHER RESOLVED, That the City and County of San Francisco will continue to  
10 support outreach, education and treatment programs for problem gamblers, in addition to  
11 strengthening prevention strategies; and, be it

12           FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors recognizes the month of March  
13 of every year as Problem Gambling Awareness Month in the City and County of San  
14 Francisco.

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