

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 2021 US legal gambling revenue reached a record high of \$53 billion;  
11 and

12 WHEREAS, In 2021 despite the pandemic, Americans wagered nearly \$57.2 billion on  
13 sports, a greater than 165% increase over 2020; and

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

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

18 WHEREAS, Six to eight million Americans, including more than 1.2 million Californians,  
19 meet the criteria for problem gambling and, by their gambling behavior, negatively affect the  
20 lives of another 48 to 80 million individuals; and

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

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

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

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

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

12          WHEREAS, Populations at high risk for gambling problems include seniors, youth,  
13 college students, veterans, African Americans, Asian Americans, LatinX and Native  
14 Americans; and

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

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

20          WHEREAS, Approximately 8.5% of youths aged between 8-18 suffer from gaming  
21 disorder; and

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

23          WHEREAS, Numerous free resources, including self-help workbooks, phone-based  
24 counseling, individual counseling, support group counseling, residential care and a locally-

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1 based helpline (1-888-968-7888) are now available for problem gamblers and affected  
2 individuals; and

3 WHEREAS, The San Francisco Department of Public Health - Community Behavioral  
4 Health Services (SFPDH-CBHS), in partnership with NICOS Chinese Health Coalition  
5 (NICOS), made the City and County of San Francisco one of the first municipalities in the  
6 nation to offer a problem gambling prevention program to its residents, beginning in 1998; and

7 WHEREAS, The NICOS problem gambling program model has been replicated  
8 nationwide; and

9 WHEREAS, In 2021, the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco  
10 unanimously adopted a resolution declaring the month of March as Problem Gambling  
11 Awareness Month; and now, therefore, be it

12 RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco  
13 recognizes the outreach efforts by SFPDH-CBHS and NICOS to communities struggling with  
14 problem gambling; and, be it

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

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

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