

1 [Recognizing Problem Gambling Awareness Month - March 2023]

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3 **Resolution recognizing March 2023 as Problem Gambling Awareness Month in the City**
4 **and 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 2022 US legal gambling revenue reached a record high of \$60.4 billion,
11 exceeding the 2021 record of \$53 billion; and

12 WHEREAS, In 2022 Americans wagered nearly \$83 billion on sports, a nearly 50%
13 increase over 2021; 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 by the
2 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 (SFDPH–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 2022, the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco
10 unanimously adopted a resolution, on file with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors in File
11 No. 220215 which is hereby declared to be a part of this Resolution as if set forth fully herein,
12 declaring the month of March as Problem Gambling Awareness Month; and now, therefore,
13 be it

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

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

20 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors recognizes the month of March
21 2023 as Problem Gambling Awareness Month in the City and County of San Francisco.

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