

1 [Recognizing Problem Gambling Awareness Month - March 2019]

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3 **Resolution recognizing March 2019 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 Daily Fantasy Sports, internet casinos, social media  
8 games, sports betting and sweepstakes cafes; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

1           WHEREAS, The estimated national social cost to families and communities due to  
2 bankruptcy, divorce, job loss, home loss, and criminal justice costs associated with problem  
3 gambling is \$6.7 billion annually; and

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

6           WHEREAS, Populations at high risk for gambling problems includes seniors, youth,  
7 college students, veterans, African Americans, Asian Americans, Latinos/Hispanics and  
8 Native Americans; and

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

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

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

18          WHEREAS, The NICOS problem gambling program model has been replicated  
19 nationwide; and

20          WHEREAS, Since 2014, the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San  
21 Francisco has unanimously adopted a Resolution annually declaring the month of March as  
22 Problem Gambling Awareness Month; and now, therefore, be it

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

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

4            FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors recognizes the month of March  
5 2019 as Problem Gambling Awareness Month in the City and County of San Francisco.

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