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## AGENDA COVER MEMO

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**AGENDA DATE:** February 23, 2010  
10:00am – Time Certain

**TO:** Board of County Commissioners

**DEPARTMENT:** Health & Human Services

**PRESENTED BY:** Rob Rockstroh

**AGENDA TITLE:** RESOLUTION \_\_\_\_\_ / IN THE MATTER OF PROCLAIMING  
MARCH 7-13, 2010 AS PROBLEM GAMBLING AWARENESS WEEK IN  
LANE COUNTY



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### I. MOTION

In the Matter of Proclaiming March 7-13, 2010 as Problem Gambling Awareness Week in Lane County

### II. AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

To educate the public that problem gambling is a serious public health issue facing thousands of citizens in Lane County, to increase awareness that gambling is not a risk-free activity, and to highlight that treatment in Oregon is free, confidential, and effective for problem gamblers and their family members.

### III. BACKGROUND/IMPLICATIONS OF ACTION

#### A. Board Action and Other History

The Board last proclaimed a "Gambling Awareness Week" via BO 05-3-9-1. This year will mark the eighth-annual National Problem Gambling Awareness Week and Oregon Problem Gambling Awareness Week, both to be observed during the week of March 7, 2010.

The purpose of Oregon Problem Gambling Awareness Week is to increase public awareness and educate community providers about problem gambling. The effort began in keeping with the message of "Hope and Help" available for individuals and families who experience problems associated with gambling behaviors. Key messages to be shared during the week and all year are: 1) problem gambling is a serious public health issue for

Oregon; 2) Oregon's investment in addressing problem gambling reduces harm and helps the economy; and 3) gambling treatment in Oregon is free, confidential, and it works.

## **B. Policy Issues**

The following information illustrates some key information about problem gambling in Oregon, as reported by 1,861 problem gamblers enrolled in Oregon's gambling treatment programs from July 2008-June 2009 (Moore, 2009):

- The average gambling debt was \$32,000 per client.
- Thirty-four percent had alcohol-related problems.
- Thirty-eight percent reported committing illegal acts to obtain gambling money.
- Half (48 percent) had suicidal thoughts and more than nine percent had attempted suicide within the past 6 months.
- Nearly 64 percent of the problem gamblers who enrolled in treatment reported their game of preference was video poker followed by video line games and slot machines at 12 percent each.
- Problem gamblers reported that their primary gambling location was Lottery retailers (75.9 percent) followed by Indian gaming centers and casinos (13.8 percent).
- Those entering treatment in Oregon had an estimated combined gambling-related debt of more than \$48.4 million.

## **C. Board Goals**

N/A

## **D. Financial and/or Resource Considerations**

None. All activities and staff time proposed in support of this commemorative week have been budgeted for under the FY 10 Fund 286 Base for prevention activities.

## **E. Analysis**

Effective prevention and treatment programs present the most significant opportunity to reduce the burden of problem gambling. The Oregon legislature, realizing the potential addictive effects of gambling, dedicated one percent (1%) of lottery revenues to address problem gambling. Lane County continues its commitment to supporting the continuum of care through its problem gambling prevention and treatment programs, which have each been awarded and recognized by the Oregon Gambling Addiction Treatment Foundation.

The prevention program, provided through Lane County Health & Human Services, aims to address risk factors for problem gambling through its educational efforts, public awareness, and collaboration with other prevention and treatment partners. During the 2009 school year, over 400 Lane County youth and young adults were served through the program's problem gambling prevention workshops, and hundreds of adults were served through presentations, educational materials, policy efforts, and collaborative efforts with

addictions and prevention partners. Additionally, the prevention program has been key in helping shape statewide prevention services planning, and hosts the official state website for Problem Gambling Services prevention and outreach providers ([www.lanecounty.org/prevention/pgs](http://www.lanecounty.org/prevention/pgs)). Lane County's Problem Gambling Prevention website, [www.lanecounty.org/prevention/gambling](http://www.lanecounty.org/prevention/gambling) (soon to be [www.preventionlane.org/gambling](http://www.preventionlane.org/gambling)), receives thousands of visits per month, and current a Google search of "gambling prevention" reveals our site as the top listing in the entire world (latest search conducted on February 5, 2010).

Lane County's gambling treatment program, Emergence, provided gambling addiction treatment services to approximately 250 problem gamblers and family members last year. Emergence also houses the statewide problem gambling Help Line, which responded to over 2,000 calls last year.

#### **F. Alternatives / Options**

1. Approve the proclamation.
2. Decline the proclamation.

#### **IV. TIMING/IMPLEMENTATION**

The proclamation being approved, local activities to commemorate Problem Gambling Awareness Week would include a Lane County – sponsored problem gambling awareness video contest (information at [www.preventionlane.org/videos.htm](http://www.preventionlane.org/videos.htm)), green-and-white ribbon week (green symbolizing help and white symbolizing hope) with interagency collaboration, presentations, media efforts, and a poster search involving middle school students from our community.

#### **V. RECOMMENDATION**

Health & Human Services approves of this proclamation.

#### **VI. FOLLOW-UP**

See above under "Timing/Implementation"

#### **VII. ATTACHMENTS**

Board Order

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS, LANE COUNTY, OREGON**

**RESOLUTION:     )   IN THE MATTER OF PROCLAIMING MARCH 7-13, 2010 AS**  
                          )   **PROBLEM GAMBLING AWARENESS WEEK IN LANE COUNTY**

**WHEREAS**, the week of March 7-13, 2010 is commemorated across the state and nation as the eighth annual Problem Gambling Awareness Week; and

**WHEREAS**, problem gambling is a significant public health issue that affects citizens of all ages and backgrounds in all our communities, and which has significant personal, social, health and financial costs; and

**WHEREAS**, problem gambling is preventable and treatable, and treatment is effective in minimizing the harm to both individuals and society as a whole; and,

**WHEREAS**, Oregon is dedicated to reducing the negative effects of gambling for all Oregonians through its nationally awarded problem gambling services system of prevention, outreach and treatment for citizens throughout the state; and

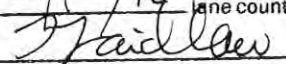
**WHEREAS**, hundreds of Eugene citizens have successfully sought treatment, are in recovery along with their families, and have benefited from the expertise of professionals in the prevention and treatment field who have dedicated themselves to helping people prevent and recover from problem gambling;

**NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED** that the Lane County Board of Commissioners proclaim the that period March 7-13, 2010 shall be recognized as **PROBLEM GAMBLING AWARENESS WEEK** in Lane County, and;

**IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Lane County Board of Commissioners strongly encourage all those who choose to gamble to make responsible decisions, and;

**IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED** the Lane County Board of Commissioners call on all County residents to support men, women, and youth who are working to improve their lives through problem gambling treatment and recovery efforts.

DATED this \_\_\_\_\_ day of February, 2010.

APPROVED AS TO FORM  
Date 2/12/10 Lane county  
  
OFFICE OF LEGAL COUNSEL

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Bill Fleenor, Chair  
Lane County Board of Commissioners