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HB428 Proponent Testimony
House Behavioral Health Recovery Supports
October 21, 2021

Chairwoman Carruthers, Vice-Chair Pavliga, Ranking Member Boyd, and members of the Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony as a proponent of HB428. Problem Gambling Network of Ohio's mission is to build a network of support for those impacted by gambling through collaboration, education and research.

I appear today to offer support for this bill and the creation of the adverse childhood experiences study commission. There is a robust correlation in the scientific literature between trauma and addiction. For instance, adults endorsing three or more Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) are more than three times more likely to engage in problem gambling (Poole et al., 2017). For individuals with dysregulated stress systems resulting from trauma, drugs of abuse can offer a reprieve from chronic hyperarousal and anxiety. Gambling (especially with electronic gambling machines) lulls players into a type of trance in which they forget about everything other than the machine (Schull, 2012). The three tasks of the commission: gathering data, studying effects, and recommending legislative strategies, as they relate to ACES, will lead to increased understanding of ACES and can help identify strategies for supporting Ohioans long before they are impacted by addictive behaviors. This approach not only provides necessary support for our citizens, but is also economically advantageous. Research shows that effective school-based substance use prevention programs could save an estimated \$18 per \$1 invested (Miller and Hendrie, 2008).

In reviewing the appointed members of the ACES study commission outlined in HB428, I would ask for the consideration of two additional members representing prevention and disordered gambling treatment. With the strong connection of prevention and the correlation between ACES and later disordered gambling, these two additions disciplines will result in a more robust and well-rounded commission.

We appreciate your time and dedication to these important issues. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony as an interested party and I look forward to answering your questions.

Poole, J. C., Kim, H. S., Dobson, K. S., & Hodgins, D. C. (2017). Adverse childhood experiences and disordered gambling: Assessing the mediating role of emotion dysregulation. *Journal of Gambling Studies*, 33, 1187-1200.

Schüll, N. D. (2012). *Addiction by design: Machine gambling in Las Vegas*. Princeton University Press.

Miller, T. and Hendrie, D. *Substance Abuse Prevention Dollars and Cents: A Cost-Benefit Analysis*, DHHS Pub. No. (SMA) 07-4298. Rockville, MD: Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2008.