

NEW YORK COUNCIL ON PROBLEM GAMBLING

JAMES MANEY

PH: 518-867-4084

JMANEY@NYPROBLEMGAMBLING.ORG

EXPECTED PLANS FOR GAMBLING EXPANSION: NEW YORK COUNCIL ON PROBLEM GAMBLING VOICES CONCERNS

ALBANY, NY, January 20, 2021- While the New York Council on Problem Gambling is neither for or against gambling and takes a neutral stance on gambling expansion, today the non-profit organization voiced concerns regarding the inevitable legalization of mobile sports betting in New York State. Executive Director, Jim Maney said, “each time we face an increase in gambling opportunities we are concerned that the ease of access, particularly for youth and for those who are struggling to control their gambling, will lead to an increase in associated problems.”

Legalization of mobile sports betting will be particularly risky for young people who are not already gambling, and who will see the legality and ease of access as an invitation to start. With brains that are not fully developed for good judgement and early onset of risky behaviors, including gambling, we know there is a link to increased problems later in life. Once again, we are exposing NYS youth to a potentially dangerous activity with little education, safeguards or prevention in place and we are doing so without proper research on the impacts and without adequate services in place to address those impacts.

Prevention Bureau Director, Jaime Costello shared, “in preparation for the legalization of mobile sports betting we need to ensure that we are protecting and supporting young adults. Education and awareness of problem gambling warning signs are key as we prepare for this expansion. Sports betting is already one of the top forms of gambling for young adults. As it moves to a platform they are not only comfortable with, but are skilled at, we have serious concerns about the potential impacts.”

The New York Council on Problem Gambling’s Mission is to raise awareness of problem gambling and to advocate for services for those impacted. “We need expanded prevention services statewide and not just focused on education but on developing policies and environmental efforts that minimize youth exposure to advertising and gambling access. We need to expand treatment service funds so that no family who has already been financially devastated by this disorder has to pay for services,” said Council Assistant Executive Director of Program, Michelle Hadden.

According to the Council, dedicating funds now, as the state prepares for mobile sports gambling is essential. There is no doubt that the gaming industry will prepare to launch with a significant investment in the platform itself, advertising and consumer recruitment. New York should want to make an investment in the future of its most at risk residents by realizing proactive and comprehensive messaging, services, safety and protection.

The Council is the voice of advocacy for the many individuals and families struggling with problem gambling in New York State. Therefore, they must voice their concerns on behalf of those who unfortunately will be casualties of the state’s expansion into mobile sports gambling.

For more information on Problem Gambling please visit **NYProblemGambling.org** OR to connect with immediate support contact **NYProblemGamblingHelp.org**

###