
HOUSE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM TO COMMISSION THE DEVELOPMENT OF EVIDENCE-BASED RESEARCH AND A POLICY FRAMEWORK TO GUIDE DECISION-MAKING ON GAMBLING-RELATED ISSUES.

1 WHEREAS, it is important for Hawaii to diversify its
2 economy and address budget shortfalls; and

3
4 WHEREAS, legalized gambling is a recurrent and popular idea
5 to address these issues; and

6
7 WHEREAS, nearly every legislative session, including the
8 Regular Session of 2021, legalized gambling legislation is
9 introduced; and

10
11 WHEREAS, nevertheless, Hawaii is one of only two states
12 without any form of legalized gambling; and

13
14 WHEREAS, Hawaii's isolated geography makes the State
15 particularly sensitive to the destabilizing effects of outside
16 forces; and

17
18 WHEREAS, although most people gamble recreationally, a
19 small proportion of individuals are harmed by gambling, which
20 can have an impact on the larger community; and

21
22 WHEREAS, similar to Hawaii's natural resources, local
23 communities must be protected as a delicate ecosystem; and

24
25 WHEREAS, any industry that is potentially addictive should
26 be treated as a potentially invasive harm; and

27
28 WHEREAS, public testimony on legalized gambling legislation
29 has frequently referenced concerns regarding general crime,
30 organized crime, problem gambling, and other related issues,



1 including sex trafficking, domestic violence, school dropout
2 rates, and undesirable tourism effects; and

3
4 WHEREAS, due to public opposition, proposals for legalized
5 gambling are swiftly rejected before sufficient debate can
6 occur, leaving key questions regarding the efficacy of regulated
7 gambling unanswered; and

8
9 WHEREAS, unregulated, illegal gambling and gambling-related
10 issues are already impacting Hawaii; and

11
12 WHEREAS, although the Honolulu Police Department only
13 reported thirty-four arrests in 2019 and forty-four arrests in
14 2018 for gambling offenses, there are believed to be
15 approximately seventy to one hundred illegal gambling rooms in
16 Hawaii; and

17
18 WHEREAS, local authorities are also reporting an increased
19 demand for gambling due to the COVID-19 pandemic; and

20
21 WHEREAS, a 2009 study by the National Council on Problem
22 Gambling estimated that the social costs of gambling addiction
23 in Hawaii from twenty thousand problem gamblers and ten thousand
24 pathological gamblers was \$26,300,000; however, \$0 in public
25 funding was provided for gambling treatment and prevention; and

26
27 WHEREAS, dedicated and protected funding for gambling
28 research will help address these critical community issues; and

29
30 WHEREAS, to achieve a more productive discourse on whether
31 Hawaii should pursue legalized gambling, research on relevant
32 public health and safety concerns and an evidenced-based policy
33 framework are necessary to guide decision-making on
34 gambling-related issues; now, therefore,

35
36 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
37 Thirty-first Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
38 of 2021, that the Department of Business, Economic Development,
39 and Tourism is requested to commission the development of
40 evidence-based research and a policy framework to guide
41 decision-making on gambling-related issues; and



1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the research should address the
2 following areas:

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- 4 (1) The prevalence of gambling problems before and after
5 initiation of legalized gambling. A baseline
6 prevalence study should establish the current state of
7 gambling along the spectrum from recreational to
8 problem gambling, broken down by demographic variables
9 of interest, such as age, gender, location, and
10 community membership. The study should also address
11 the cultural characteristics of gamblers and gambling
12 communities. If gambling is legalized, subsequent
13 studies, conducted at least one-year following the
14 initiation of legalized gambling, should assess
15 changes in gambling patterns and populations. These
16 studies should evaluate the relationships to
17 gambling-related harms, such as comorbidity,
18 unemployment, criminal activity, and other factors
19 commonly evaluated in research literature;
20
- 21 (2) Focused evaluation of gambling and the impact on
22 vulnerable populations. Research should identify the
23 attitudes of individuals in these groups, how
24 legalized gambling would positively or negatively
25 affect these individuals, and the safeguards that
26 could be instituted to amplify the positive and
27 mitigate the negative consequences. Research should
28 also include policy analysis to eliminate loopholes
29 that create an incentive for predatory businesses to
30 emerge;
31
- 32 (3) Responsible gambling framework for regulation of
33 gambling operators, including evaluation of card-based
34 systems, limit-setting strategies, player ambassadors,
35 and other mechanisms used internationally to assist
36 players in making informed choices and engaging in
37 positive play;
38
- 39 (4) Integrated tourism planning to understand at multiple
40 levels how to maximize strategic differentiation in
41 any tourism-based gaming products and to minimize any
42 cannibalistic effects;



- 1 (5) Economic impact studies to assess the effect of gaming
2 facilities on communities and the feasibility of
3 asset-based incentive programs for specific
4 communities;
- 5
- 6 (6) Evidence-based strategies for education of youth and
7 prevention of underage gambling as well as development
8 of an identification and treatment network for those
9 with gambling problems; and
- 10
- 11 (7) Training and certification for problem gambling
12 counselors as well as operator staff and employees;
13 and
- 14

15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that research should be funded by a
16 dedicated and protected revenue stream, outside of the general
17 fund, to ensure independent analysis of key research questions;
18 and

19
20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the policy framework should:

- 21
- 22 (1) Provide a realistic appraisal of the resources
23 necessary to ensure public health and safety and
24 mitigate gambling-related harm;
- 25
- 26 (2) Guide the funding and development of:
27
 - 28 (A) A treatment network to provide individuals who
29 gamble problematically and their families with
30 subsidized treatment; and
 - 31
 - 32 (B) Educational programs in schools to limit underage
33 gambling; and
 - 34
- 35 (3) Establish long-term goals, including:
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 - 37 (A) Culturally competent policy analysis and
38 recommendations;
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 - 40 (B) Understanding the range of impacts based on the
41 type of gambling involved, such as slots, table

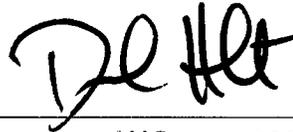


H.R. NO. 114

- 1 games, racing and sports, daily fantasy, poker,
- 2 bingo, keno, and lottery;
- 3
- 4 (C) Optimal locations for gaming facilities and
- 5 site-specific feasibility studies;
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- 7 (D) Regulatory recommendations, including licensing,
- 8 compliance, and suspicious activity monitoring;
- 9
- 10 (E) Workforce capabilities assessments and
- 11 development of training programs; and
- 12
- 13 (F) Protections and incentives for vulnerable
- 14 populations and Native Hawaiians to develop
- 15 responsible gambling habits; and
- 16

17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a certified copy of this
18 Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Business, Economic
19 Development, and Tourism.

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21
22 OFFERED BY: _____



MAR 12 2021

