

115TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 2841

To require policies and programs to research, prevent, and address the harmful consequences of gambling disorder among members of the Armed Forces and their dependents, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 15, 2018

Ms. WARREN (for herself and Mr. DAINES) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Armed Services

A BILL

To require policies and programs to research, prevent, and address the harmful consequences of gambling disorder among members of the Armed Forces and their dependents, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Gambling Addiction
5 Prevention Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress makes the following findings:

1 (1) Gambling disorder is a public health con-
2 cern characterized by increasing preoccupation with
3 gambling, loss of control, restlessness, or irritability
4 when attempting to stop gambling, and continuation
5 of the gambling behavior in spite of mounting seri-
6 ous, negative consequences.

7 (2) According to the National Council on Prob-
8 lem Gambling, it is estimated that as many as
9 56,000 active duty members of the Armed Forces
10 meet criteria for gambling disorder.

11 (3) However, according to the Department of
12 Defense, only about 120 military personnel were di-
13 agnosed with gambling disorder or were seen for
14 problem gambling each year between fiscal year
15 2011 and fiscal year 2015.

16 (4) According to a 2017 report by the Govern-
17 ment Accountability Office—

18 (A) the Department of Defense operates
19 more than 3,100 slot machines at military in-
20 stallations overseas that are available to mem-
21 bers of the Armed Forces and their families;

22 (B) those slot machines generate approxi-
23 mately \$100,000,000 in revenue for the Depart-
24 ment, which is used for further recreational ac-
25 tivities for members of the Armed Forces; and

1 (C) the Department and the Coast Guard
2 do not systematically screen for gambling dis-
3 order.

4 **SEC. 3. INCLUSION OF GAMBLING DISORDER IN HEALTH**
5 **ASSESSMENTS FOR MEMBERS OF THE ARMED**
6 **FORCES AND RELATED RESEARCH EFFORTS.**

7 (a) ANNUAL PERIODIC HEALTH ASSESSMENT.—The
8 Secretary of Defense shall incorporate medical screening
9 questions specific to gambling disorder into the Annual
10 Periodic Health Assessment conducted by the Department
11 of Defense for members of the Armed Forces.

12 (b) RESEARCH EFFORTS.—The Secretary shall incor-
13 porate into ongoing research efforts of the Department
14 questions on gambling disorder, as appropriate, including
15 by restoring such questions into the Health Related Be-
16 haviors Survey of Active Duty Military Personnel and the
17 Health Related Behaviors Survey of Reserve Component
18 Personnel.

19 (c) REPORT.—Not later than two years after the date
20 of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit
21 to the congressional defense committees a report on efforts
22 undertaken pursuant to subsections (a) and (b) and the
23 findings of the assessments and surveys described in those
24 subsections with respect to the prevalence of gambling dis-
25 order among members of the Armed Forces.

1 (d) CONGRESSIONAL DEFENSE COMMITTEES DE-
 2 FINED.—In this section, the term “congressional defense
 3 committees” has the meaning given that term in section
 4 101 of title 10, United States Code.

5 **SEC. 4. DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF POLI-**
 6 **CIES AND PROGRAMS TO PREVENT AND**
 7 **TREAT GAMBLING DISORDER AMONG MEM-**
 8 **BERS OF THE ARMED FORCES AND THEIR DE-**
 9 **PENDENTS.**

10 (a) POLICIES AND PROGRAMS.—

11 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Defense
 12 shall develop and implement policies and programs
 13 on prevention, education, and treatment of gambling
 14 disorder and integrate gambling disorder into exist-
 15 ing mental health and substance use disorder pro-
 16 grams.

17 (2) CONSULTATION.—The Secretary shall de-
 18 velop the policies and programs described in para-
 19 graph (1) in coordination with the Interagency Task
 20 Force on Military and Veterans Mental Health.

21 (b) EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS AND PROMOTION OF
 22 RESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOR.—

23 (1) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out policies and
 24 programs developed and implemented under sub-
 25 section (a)(1), if the Secretary hosts or provides

1 gambling activities at a morale, welfare, and recre-
2 ation facility of the Department of Defense, the Sec-
3 retary shall, at that facility—

4 (A) provide educational materials that
5 identify the risks of gambling and a list of re-
6 sources and informational material on where
7 members of the Armed Forces can seek help if
8 they develop gambling disorder; and

9 (B) implement measures that incentivize
10 responsible behavior, including access, avail-
11 ability, and patronage restrictions comparable
12 to other high-risk leisure activities.

13 (2) FUNDING OF MEASURES.—The Secretary
14 shall fund measures described in paragraph (1)(B)
15 through the use of proceeds generated by gambling
16 activities at morale, welfare, and recreation facilities
17 of the Department.

18 (c) REPORT.—Not later than one year after the date
19 of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit
20 to the congressional defense committees a report on efforts
21 undertaken under this section.

22 (d) CONGRESSIONAL DEFENSE COMMITTEES DE-
23 FINED.—In this section, the term “congressional defense

- 1 committees” has the meaning given that term in section
- 2 101 of title 10, United States Code.

