

The WAGER, Vol. 1(9) - The American Medical Association adopts a gambling resolution

February 27, 1996

In 1994, at the American Medical Association's (A.M.A.) annual meeting, the House of Delegates included a discussion of compulsive gambling. Consideration of the promotion, epidemiology, and hypothesized economic costs associated with gambling led to the adoption of a gambling resolution. Specifically, delegates from Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont introduced issues of 1) gambling promotion by private entrepreneurs and state governments, 2) a prevalence estimate of 4.5% for pathological gambling, 3) participation in gambling by teenagers, which is estimated to be growing three times faster than among adults, and 4) an estimated cost in excess of \$40 billion annually to American business as a consequence of compulsive gambling. In addition, the delegates proposed that 1) a percentage of white collar crimes such as embezzlement, forgery and fraud are attributable directly to compulsive gamblers seeking to fund their addiction, and 2) greater availability of gambling leads to greater gambling behavior. The resolution printed below was adopted by the A.M.A. in June, 1994.

Where the phrase "compulsive" now stands, earlier versions of the resolution used the phrase "addictive."

Resolution No. 430

WARNING: GAMBLING CAN BECOME COMPULSIVE BEHAVIOR

HOUSE ACTION; ADOPTED AS FOLLOWS:

RESOLVED, That the American Medical Association encourage physicians to advise their patients of the compulsive behavior potential of gambling; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the American Medical Association encourage states which operate gambling programs to provide a fixed percentage of their revenue for education, prevention and treatment of gambling compulsive behavior; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the American Medical Association request states which operate gambling programs to affix to all lottery tickets and display at all lottery ticket counters a sign which states that gambling may become a compulsive behavior and help is available through your local gambling hotline.

This public education project is funded, in part, by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.

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