STATE OF NEW YORK

9239

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

November 7, 2025

Introduced by M. of A. WOERNER -- read once and referred to the Committee on Higher Education

AN ACT to amend the education law and the state finance law, in relation to creating a problem gambling research institute and fund

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. The education law is amended by adding a new section 355-f to read as follows:

§ 355-f. New York state problem gambling research institute. 1. Institute formation and goals. Subject to amounts available by appropriation, the New York state problem gambling research institute, hereinafter the "institute", is hereby created within the state university of New York. The purposes of the institute shall include:

(a) advising the governor, governmental agencies, the regents, and the legislature on matters relating to problem gambling in New York state;

(b) fostering, pursuing, and sponsoring collaborative problem gambling research;

(c) increasing understanding by establishing and reporting on what is known and what is not known about problem gambling in the state;

(d) identifying priority needs for problem gambling research within New York that currently is not receiving adequate attention, and identifying public or private entities that are best situated to address such needs, thereby leading to better coordination of problem gambling research efforts in the state;

(e) promoting awareness of existing and new sources of problem gambling information and problem gambling while educating elected officials, governmental agencies, and the general public on problem gambling issues through such means as it may determine;

(f) organizing and sponsoring meetings on problem gambling topics;

(g) encouraging the establishment of networks of collaborating experts engaged in related aspects of problem gambling research;

EXPLANATION--Matter in *italics* (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [-] is old law to be omitted.

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(h) raising sensitivity to problem gambling concerns among state and local government agencies, and serving as a forum for enhanced interagency information sharing and cooperation;

(i) recommending priority activities for funding through the problem gambling research fund, created pursuant to section ninety-seven-bbbbb of the state finance law;

(j) working on a continuing basis with policymakers in the legislature and state agencies to identify, implement, and evaluate innovative problem gambling prevention policies and programs;

(k) recruiting and providing specialized training opportunities for new researchers, including experienced investigators in related fields who are beginning work on problem gambling, young investigators who have completed their education, postdoctoral scholars, doctoral students, and undergraduates; and

(l) providing copies of their research publications to the legislature and to agencies supplying data used in the conduct of such research as soon as is practicable following publication.

2. Research. The institute shall foster, pursue, and sponsor basic, translational, and transformative research, field studies, and all other such activities to research:

(a) user interface design elements that contribute to the addictive nature of online gambling;

(b) the nature of problem gambling, including individual and societal determinants of risk for involvement in problem gambling;

(c) the individual, community, and societal consequences of problem gambling;

(d) the prevention and treatment of problem gambling at the individual, community, and societal levels; and

(e) the effectiveness of existing laws and policies intended to reduce problem gambling, and efforts to promote responsible gambling.

3. Education and information transfer programs. To the extent possible, the institute shall foster the collection, transfer, and application of problem gambling information in the state by:

(a) fostering access, compatibility, interchange, and synthesis of data about problem gambling maintained by public entities, academic and research institutions, and private organizations;

(b) employing advanced technology to coordinate for ease of use of the scattered problem gambling resources of the state; and

(c) supporting the preparation and publication of interpretative works that draw upon problem gambling resources.

4. Quinquennial reports. The institute shall prepare and submit a report within one year of the effective date of this section and every five years thereafter to the governor and the legislature describing programs undertaken or sponsored by the institute, the status of knowledge regarding problem gambling in the state, and research needs related thereto.

5. Executive committee. The institute shall be guided by an executive committee. Members of the committee shall be from varying backgrounds with members selected from the scientific community, academic community, as well as from government service. Such committee shall consist of fourteen members including the commissioner, the chair of the gaming commission or their designee, the commissioner of the office of addiction services and supports, the commissioner of mental health, the chancellor of the university or their designee, three at large members appointed by the governor, two members appointed by the temporary president of the senate, one member appointed by the minority leader of the

senate, two members appointed by the speaker of the assembly, and one member appointed by the minority leader of the assembly. Appointed members shall serve for a term of three years, provided that such members may be reappointed. The executive committee shall:

(a) adopt policies, procedures, and criteria governing the programs and operations of the institute;

(b) recommend to the governor and legislature appropriate actions to reduce problem gambling within the state;

(c) develop and implement the research, education, and information transfer programs of the institute;

(d) identify and rate proposals for problem gambling research;

(e) submit to the director of the budget, and the chairpersons of the senate finance committee and the assembly ways and means committee on the first day of October, two thousand twenty-six and on or before August first each year thereafter, a budget request for the expenditure of funds available from the problem gambling research fund, for the purposes established by section ninety-seven-bbbbb of the state finance law; and

(f) meet publicly at least twice a year. The committee shall widely disseminate notice of its meetings at least two weeks prior to each meeting. The commissioners on the executive committee and the chancellor of the university shall aid in such dissemination.

6. Scientific working group. The institute shall appoint a scientific working group consisting of individuals having knowledge and expertise in problem gambling research which shall advise and make recommendations to the institute regarding its research and information programs.

7. Institute director. The institute shall have a director who shall be appointed by the executive committee and shall after appointment be an employee of the state university. The institute director shall serve at the pleasure of the executive committee. The institute director shall serve as chief administrative officer of the institute and provide the necessary support for the executive committee.

8. Compensation. The members of the executive committee and the scientific working group shall serve without additional compensation, but shall be eligible to receive reimbursement for their actual and necessary expenses from the problem gambling research fund established by section ninety-seven-bbbbb of the state finance law, provided however, members of the executive committee representing state agencies may receive reimbursement for their actual and necessary expenses from their respective agencies. Members of the executive committee and scientific working group shall be considered state employees for the purposes of sections seventeen and nineteen of the public officers law.

9. Memorandum of understanding. The state university of New York, the department of mental health, the gaming commission, and the office of addiction services and supports shall enter into a written memorandum of understanding to facilitate the appropriate implementation of the problem gambling research institute and the goals, responsibilities, and programs established by this section.

§ 2. The state finance law is amended by adding a new section 97-bbbbb to read as follows:

§ 97-bbbbb. Problem gambling research fund. 1. There is hereby established in the joint custody of the state comptroller and the commissioner of taxation and finance a fund to be known as the problem gambling research fund.

2. The problem gambling research fund shall consist of all moneys credited or transferred thereto from any other fund or source, including

any federal, state, or private funds, pursuant to law for the purposes of problem gambling research.

3. Moneys in the problem gambling research fund may be invested by the comptroller pursuant to section ninety-eight-a of this article, and any income received by the comptroller shall be used for the purposes of such fund.

4. The moneys held in or credited to the fund shall be expended for the purposes set forth in this section, and may not be interchanged or commingled with any other account or fund but may be commingled with any other fund or account for investment purposes.

5. Moneys in the problem gambling research fund, following appropriation by the legislature, shall be available to the New York problem gambling research institute for its activities as set forth in section three hundred fifty-five-f of the education law.

§ 3. This act shall take effect immediately.