



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph P. Addabbo Jr.

Addabbo highlights importance of New York's gaming addiction programs during National Problem Gambling Awareness Month

SENATOR JOSEPH P. ADDABBO, JR. March 1, 2022

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With New Yorkers enjoying the start of mobile sports betting in the state, it is vital that there are anti-addiction programs for those who may have an issue with gambling. March is National Problem Gambling Awareness Month, and State Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr. wants to highlight the importance of identifying and helping those who may suffer from problem gambling.

Addabbo, Chair of the Senate Racing, Gaming and Wagering Committee, worked for years to bring legal mobile sports betting to the state, and now that that vision has become a reality, he is looking to keep those who wish to place their bets safe.

“By bringing mobile sports betting to New York we are able to allow New Yorkers to safely bet legally in their own state rather than heading to neighboring states or the illegal market,” Addabbo explained. “And while a large majority of players are able to regulate their usage and control their betting, there are those who will suffer from problem gambling. Through legalization, we are able to identify those people — and those who may be moving towards a gambling problem — and provide them with the resources they need to control their gaming. During National Problem Gambling Awareness Month, I want to shed light on the ways we

have increased our problem gaming programs in the state and bring awareness to the issue.”

With the legalization of mobile sports betting, which legislative language included roughly a dozen safeguards and addiction measures, problem gaming programs in the state have a new source of revenue of \$6 million each year for problem gaming education and treatment.

Additionally, brick-and-mortar gaming sites are training their employees to spot the warning signs of problem gaming and how to help patrons with symptoms of gaming addiction.

Procedures have been created for all of the mobile sports betting providers that allow customers to exclude themselves from gaming and limit their wagers when the customer raises the flag on their own betting habits. Sportsbook operators are also required to freeze accounts and send a message to any customer when they have \$2,500 in lifetime deposits, provide them with information about problem gaming resources, and sportsbooks must inform customers about assistance for compulsive play while maintaining easy-to-find gaming assistance resources.

“I am thrilled with how popular mobile sports betting has become in New York in just a few short months. While millions will be made available for education, now is the time where we need to monitor the process and make adjustments in all aspects of mobile sports wagering — including the problem gaming side,” Addabbo added. “Whenever you introduce something new like this there will be those that either develop problem gaming issues or expand those problems. It is now our job to make sure that those individuals get the help they need.”

“We cannot move forward with gaming in New York without addressing the addiction side at the same time,” Addabbo said. “I want to see gaming flourish even further in our state, thus increasing educational funding, revenue and jobs, but we must have safeguards and help in place for those that have a problem. I look forward to working with those in the gaming addiction field to provide New Yorkers with the best help and resources.”

The Senator and his legislative team have been in contact with the NYS Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS) Commissioner, Chinazo Cunningham, in an effort to address and monitor problem gambling issues.

If you or someone you know is struggling with gambling call the free, confidential NYS HOPELINE at 1-877-8-HOPENY or text HOPENY (467369) for help, and referrals to treatment.