

Alaska State Legislature

House of Representatives

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SPONSOR STATEMENT: HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 3

While some Alaskans may consider gambling to be a harmless pastime, many underestimate the costs in dollars and human suffering associated with it. House Joint Resolution 3 would amend Alaska's Constitution to require an affirmative vote of the people before any form of gambling for profit may be authorized in Alaska.

Studies show that about 2.5 million Americans are pathological gamblers, and another 3 million are problem gamblers. These compulsive gamblers have high rates of suicide, depression, mania, alcohol and drug abuse, and arrest rates. According to the American Insurance Institute, gambling is the main cause of white collar crime, and is the third leading cause of individual bankruptcy in America.

Though the human suffering caused by compulsive gambling may be borne by a minority of the population, the overall economic and social costs are shared by all. Before expanding gambling in our state, it is imperative that the voice of Alaskans be heard. I respectfully ask for your support of HJR 3