



Problem Gambling

COALITION OF COLORADO

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March 1, 2009

Dear members of the media,

Last year, former NBA referee Tim Donaghy was sentenced to 15 months in prison for betting on games and using his position to help other gamblers profit. The compulsive gambling scandal – like many involving professional sports figures – dominated headlines. But problem gambling spreads far beyond the world of sports, and often doesn't get the attention it deserves. The Problem Gambling Coalition will turn the spotlight on this very serious issue during National Problem Gambling Awareness Week, March 1-7, 2009.

Gambling addictions can affect anyone in any walk of life, regardless of occupation, income, age, race or gender. The National Council on Problem Gambling estimates that about 2.5 million adults are pathological gamblers and another 3 million should be considered problem gamblers. The impact of problem gambling can be devastating. According to the National Gambling Impact Study Commission, problem gambling costs society \$5 billion annually in job losses, welfare benefits, increased bankruptcies and crime.

In Denver, we are truly fortunate to have services such as the nationally recognized University of Denver's Problem Gambling Treatment and Research Center. The DU Center offers patients and their families counseling, consultation, support and therapy groups. Unlike many programs across the country, the Center allows clients to customize the type of treatment they believe best fits their needs.

In addition to the Center, individuals in Colorado can access more information and available treatment through the Colorado Problem Gambling Helpline, at (800) 522-4700 or by visiting the Colorado Problem Gambling Coalition of Colorado's Web site at www.problemgamblingcolorado.org.

During National Problem Gambling Awareness Week, the Coalition works with many organizations nationally, to raise awareness of the consequences of this destructive issue and provide information about the tools available for individuals and family members of problem gamblers.

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As a partner in these efforts, we provide a number of resources in the enclosed press kit:

- Press release on the Colorado Problem Gambling Helpline
- Press release on House Bill 1314, which provides a new source of funding for problem gambling treatment and services
- List of additional resources
- Facts and figures regarding problem gambling

Feel free to contact me with any additional questions. We appreciate your assistance in addressing this growing concern.

Sincerely,

Amber Bunch
Executive Director of the Problem Gambling Coalition of Colorado

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Problem Gambling Coalition of Colorado
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