



HCR 3002

January 15, 2025

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Chair Klemin and Members of the Committee: My name is Carter Gill, and I am Vice President of Governmental Affairs. I am here today in opposition to House Concurrent Resolution 3002.

The North Dakota Student Association is dedicated to ensuring that students have a voice at the table in policy that affects higher education. We consist of delegates from each of the 11 public North Dakota University System (NDUS) institutions, meeting monthly to engage students in discussions about North Dakota higher education policy. Since 1969, our mission has been to empower students, create collaboration between the student bodies of the North Dakota public universities, and to provide a student perspective on higher education policy.

During the last academic year, the NDSA General Assembly approved [NDSA-14-2324](#): A resolution in opposition to the expansion of sports betting in the state of North Dakota. The resolution focused on how sports gambling is attractive to college students and has infiltrated particularly male spaces. Many sports betting companies' have aggressively marketed and taken predatory tactics towards men to start gambling on sports.

From research, these tactics have been shown to work, where now one in ten college students are pathological gamblers, according to the [University of Buffalo](#).¹ This is significantly higher than the national average of 2-5%. This increase in gambling addiction, which is a disorder recognized by the American Psychiatric Association, puts a financial strain on victims of the disorder. Additional research has shown that pathological gamblers who primarily wager on

¹ https://time.com/6342504/gambling-addiction-sports-betting-college-students/?utm_source=iterable&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=campaign_8549999_nl_Afternoon-Update_date_20231214&cid=pm&source=ams&sourceid=

sports are more likely to have substance abuse problems than other types of pathological gamblers. Since 2019, the number of people in the state of Connecticut who have contacted the state's gambling hotline has doubled, and those who need help are getting younger, impacting college-age students.

Regarding its specific impact on students, students come to North Dakota to earn their degree, participate in athletics, and build professional relationships; not to participate or be the subject of sports betting. A concern among delegates of the NDSA is its impact on the social-emotional health of student athletes. When it comes to professional sports, there is a disconnect between the spectator and the player. In college sports, the student athletes attend classes, social events, and are actively participating on campus. The disconnect that exists in professional sports does not exist in college sports. The introduction of broad access to sports gambling in North Dakota creates the potential for an environment that is even more stressful for college athletes than what already exists. In states where sports betting on college sports is legal, conditions have reached a point in college athletics where the [NCAA](#) has published a press release detailing how in 2024, the NCAA and their data partner Signify Group had verified over 5,000 instances of online interactions that were abusive, discriminatory, or threatening.²

The study found that during March Madness, women's basketball players received threats three times the rate of male players. Overall, the most common form of online interaction the previously mentioned forms was in a sexual manner to both male and female athletes. The study also determined that 12% of all recorded online abuse was directly tied to sports betting, but other categories such as racism and sexism was also influenced by sports betting. Also, the University of North Dakota has reported a six-fold increase in counseling appointments directly related to sports gambling addiction. Continued legalization of sports betting would contribute to our North Dakota student athletes to be further exposed to this online abuse as well as a strain on in-person relationships.

The NDSA strongly opposes this bill on the basis of its impact on NDUS students and student athletes and asks the committee to give a DO NOT PASS recommendation to this resolution.

²<https://click.mail2.ncaa.com/?qs=75995aa83c1601c9af9be1c0de5e81b1282db32ee8bc9d53fe54ceb4dd7d31887b97ebbc7dc96f60bb6eb73ecf6ebb5c13f88baec5dfa00>.