

PPA commends introduction of Federal Internet Gambling Bill

Washington, D.C. – The Poker Players Alliance (PPA), the leading poker grassroots advocacy group with more than one million members nationwide, today commended Representative Peter King (R-NY) for introducing federal online gambling legislation, which would empower states to license Intra-state online poker and casino style games under appropriate federal regulatory oversight.

„On behalf of the PPA membership and millions of poker players in the United States, I thank Congressman King for his commitment to protecting Americans' freedom to play poker on the Internet,“ said former Senator Alfonse D'Amato, chairman of the PPA. „States are already moving to regulate online gaming. In order to avoid a patchwork of state laws that limit player pools and provides consumer protections only to Americans in those states, it is time for Congress to step up and pass federal legislation.“

The comprehensive bill is similar to the Internet Gambling Regulation, Consumer Protection and Enforcement Act, legislation that was introduced in 2011 by Representative John Campbell (R-CA) and House Financial Services Ranking Member Barney Frank (D-MA) and that was reported out of the House Financial Services Committee with broad bipartisan support.

Among other things, the bill:

- * Requires states to be certified by the U.S. Department of Treasury to license potential operators. States may choose to participate in the national online gaming market without becoming a licensing agent, however;

- * Authorizes federal funding to address problem gambling

addiction, similar to what is in place for all other types of addiction;

- * Gives states the freedom to opt-out of Internet gaming. Governors must notify the Department of Treasury that their state will opt-out within 120 days of passage of the bill, and opting out will NOT prohibit states from establishing their own *intra*-state online gaming regimes;

- * Ensures mandatory implementation of technologies to protect against underage gambling using the commercial and government databases used for online banking to verify age and identity;

- * Allows equal access to licenses for all providers, including Indian tribes and lotteries;

- * Preserves the traditional authority of regulators to determine the suitability of online operators when evaluating license applications; and

- * Contains high standards to thwart fraud, abuse and cheating to ensure fair games for customers.

„Congress cannot ignore progress and the facts. Americans want the freedom to play online poker in a regulated market and states are filling the void. Already three states have authorized online gaming and several more are on the precipice of joining them,“ said John Pappas, executive director of the PPA. „Poker players recognize the benefits of a federal law over the current state-by-state approach. However, as more states lead, it will be difficult for Congress to follow – and even more difficult to see the necessity of federal legislation. We hope that all of Congress can work together and support this bill. We look forward to supporting this vital legislation and urge its swift movement through the legislative process.“