



NATIONAL CONFERENCE of STATE LEGISLATURES

The Forum for America's Ideas

April 3, 2014

The Honorable Harry Reid
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable John Boehner
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Bruce W. Starr
*Senator
Oregon
President, NCSL*

Thomas W. Wright
*Chief of Staff to Speaker
Alaska
Staff Chair, NCSL*

William T. Pound
Executive Director

Re: NCSL Opposition to the Restoration of America's Wire Act

Dear Senators Reid and McConnell, Speaker Boehner and Leader Pelosi:

On behalf of the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), we write to express our strong opposition to the Restoration of America's Wire Act, and urge you to respect the sovereignty of states to decide whether or not to allow gambling, and in particular online gambling.

Since its inception, NCSL has resisted unwarranted preemptions of state laws and federal legislation that threatens state authority and autonomy – especially in areas of successfully demonstrated state stewardship like gambling. States have proven that they are effective regulators of the gambling industry and the proponents of this legislation fail to make a case that we have been negligent in our responsibilities to the industry and consumers. This attempt to enact a wholesale prohibition of online gambling with the Restoration of America's Wire Act is merely a solution seeking a problem.

Since the 2011 Department of Justice opinion clarifying the scope of the Wire Act, Delaware, Nevada, New Jersey and the U.S. Virgin Islands have legalized some form of online gambling within their state, while Utah and Maine have acted to forbid such activity. Many more states are considering bills that would authorize, expand or restrict Internet gambling as well. This is the way it should work, each state making the decision that is best suited to the desires of its residents and not through a congressional mandate.

We appreciate the opportunity to express the views of our colleagues across the country on this topic. We respectfully request the state legislative perspective be considered as Congress continues to examine this issue. If you have any questions regarding the concerns of state legislatures or would like to discuss the issue further, please contact James Ward (james.ward@ncsl.org; 202-624-8683) or Jeff Hurley (jeff.hurley@ncsl.org; 202-624-7753) in NCSL's Washington, D.C. office.

Sincerely,

Senator Bruce Starr
Oregon Senate
NCSL President

Senator Debbie Smith
Nevada Senate
NCSL President-Elect

cc: Members of the United States Senate and House of Representatives

Denver
7700 East First Place
Denver, Colorado 80230
Phone 303.364.7700 Fax 303.364.7800

Washington
444 North Capitol Street, N.W. Suite 515
Washington, D.C. 20001
Phone 202.624.5400 Fax 202.737.1069

Website www.ncsl.org
Email info@ncsl.org