

Frank Introduces New Bill Addressing U.S. Online Poker Online Gaming Issues

by PokerPages.com

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Yesterday Barney Frank, (D-Mass) and House Committee on Financial Services Chairman, introduced a new bill called the Payments System Protection Act of 2008 that would order the Department of the Treasury and Federal Reserve System, in consultation with the Attorney General, to define what types of online gambling are unlawful in the United States, so the U.S. financial services industry can comply with the Unlawful Internet Gambling Enforcement Act of 2006 (UIGEA).

And, responding to concerns raised by the banking industry [in a congressional hearing on April 2, 2008](#) and via continued correspondence about the excessive burden and ambiguity in the proposed rules to implement UIGEA, the bill would also require federal regulators to appoint a special Administrative Law Judge to define unlawful Internet gambling activities and conduct an economic impact study on the costs for compliance.

At that April congressional hearing, even representatives of the Department of the Treasury and Federal Reserve System acknowledged the challenges that financial institutions will face while trying to comply with UIGEA.

SIMILAR TO EARLIER ATTEMPT

The measure is similar to one that in June 2008 failed to emerge from Frank's own committee due to a tie vote of 32 for and 32 against.

Reps. Frank and Ron Paul (R- Tex.) earlier this year had introduced the [first version of the Payments System Protection Act \(H.R. 5767\)](#), which attempted to block the U.S. government from taking any further steps in developing regulations to implement UIGEA. An amendment, proposed by Rep. Peter King of New York, was added that would also have required the Treasury Department, the Justice Department and the Federal Reserve to write a uniform definition of which types of gambling should and should not be allowed on the Internet.

During the June vote, Rep. Frank told his colleagues that Congress is putting the U.S. financial services industry at risk by not clarifying the regulations to enforce UIGEA and defining unlawful Internet gambling activities, saying: "Hijacking the financial payment system at a time when it is under major stress and giving them the job of carrying out an unclear mandate doesn't make sense."

EFFORTS NEEDING YOUR SUPPORT

In a press release, the Safe and Secure Internet Gambling Initiative reviewed the many efforts that need poker players' support in order to get passed by Congress:

["The Internet Gambling Regulation and Enforcement Act of 2007 \(H.R. 2046, also known as IGREA\)](#), introduced by Rep. Frank, would establish an enforcement framework for licensed gambling operators to accept bets and wagers from individuals in the U.S. It includes a number of built-in consumer protections, including safeguards against compulsive and underage gambling, money laundering, fraud and identity theft.

"A companion piece of legislation that would ensure the collection of taxes on regulated Internet gambling activities, [the Internet Gambling Regulation and Tax Enforcement Act of 2008 \(H.R. 5523\)](#) was introduced by Congressman Jim McDermott (D-WA).

"Additionally, Rep. McDermott introduced, the Investing in our Human Resources Act (H.R.6051), which would direct new revenue generated by regulated Internet gambling activities to be spent on job training for those in the declining sectors of the economy and educational assistance for foster care youth. The bill also includes provisions to encourage responsible Internet gambling behavior and an awareness of unsafe practices, something which has been praised by problem gambling advocates."

The Safe and Secure Internet Gambling Initiative promotes the freedom of individuals to gamble online with the proper safeguards to protect consumers and ensure the integrity of financial transactions. For more information on the Initiative, [click here](#). [Their website](#) provides a means for individuals to register support for regulated Internet gambling with their elected representatives.

Additionally, the Poker Players Alliance (PPA) provides [a way to register to vote](#), as well as [to find and contact their elected representatives](#).

PokerPages.com hopes poker players of all levels and experience realize how their voice and vote will make a difference in these efforts to keep online poker accessible by U.S. residents.