

Take Action: House Bill Could Gut Gambling Regulations

Citizen Link

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by Jennifer Mesko

'Every citizen should care about this issue because it will bring Las Vegas into every home in America.'

Two years ago, Congress passed the Unlawful Internet Gambling Enforcement Act (UIGEA). The law gives financial institutions a government go-ahead to block payments to off-shore Internet gambling interests.

And for two years, Rep. Barney Frank, D-Mass., has fought to undo the regulations — which took family groups nearly a decade to put in place.

In April, Frank's first attempt failed. Now, he's at it again.

H.R. 6870 — the so-called Payments System Protection Act of 2008 — purports to clarify UIGEA, but actually would undermine the current regulations. The House Financial Services Committee, which is led by Frank, is scheduled to vote on the bill Tuesday.

"Every citizen should care about this issue because it will bring Las Vegas into every home in America, 24 hours a day, seven days a week," Les Bernal, executive director of [Stop Predatory Gambling](#), told *CitizenLink*. "Its target audience is teenagers."

According to estimates, Bernal said, problem gamblers between ages 18-25 lose about \$30,000 a year. Unleashing Internet gambling would only make the problem worse.

Bernal is heading up a [conference](#) at the end of this month to "awaken America's conscience about predatory gambling, what it means for our democracy and the impact it has on the families and businesses in our communities."

Stop Predatory Gambling, a national grass-roots movement, kicks off Sept. 26-27 near Washington, D.C.

Family advocates can connect with others who are fighting the spread of predatory gambling.

"It offers you the unique ability to share your experiences and knowledge with citizens from across the country," Bernal said, "reminding each of us that we are not alone in this fight and the importance of renewing the passion in our hearts."

TAKE ACTION

H.R. 6870 — the so-called Payments System Protection Act of 2008 — is scheduled for a House committee vote Tuesday and could be headed to the full House soon.

If your U.S. representative serves on the House Financial Services Committee (check the list below), please call him or her immediately to request a vote against H.R. 6870. If your representative is not on the committee, please ask him or her to oppose H.R. 6870 if it reaches the House floor. You can find contact information through our [Action Center](#).

House Financial Services Committee

Democratic Members

Chairman Barney Frank, MA
Rep. Paul E. Kanjorski, PA
Rep. Maxine Waters, CA
Rep. Carolyn B. Maloney, NY
Rep. Luis V. Gutierrez, IL
Rep. Nydia M. Velázquez, NY
Rep. Melvin L. Watt, NC
Rep. Gary L. Ackerman, NY
Rep. Brad Sherman, CA
Rep. Gregory W. Meeks, NY
Rep. Dennis Moore, KS
Rep. Michael E. Capuano, MA
Rep. Rubén Hinojosa, TX
Rep. William Lacy Clay, MO
Rep. Carolyn McCarthy, NY
Rep. Joe Baca, CA
Rep. Stephen F. Lynch, MA
Rep. Brad Miller, NC
Rep. David Scott, GA
Rep. Al Green, TX
Rep. Emanuel Cleaver, MO
Rep. Melissa L. Bean, IL
Rep. Gwen Moore, WI
Rep. Lincoln Davis, TN
Rep. Paul W. Hodes, NH
Rep. Keith Ellison, MN
Rep. Ron Klein, FL
Rep. Tim Mahoney, FL
Rep. Charles Wilson, OH
Rep. Ed Perlmutter, CO
Rep. Christopher S. Murphy, CT
Rep. Joe Donnelly, IN

Rep. Bill Foster, IL
Rep. Andre Carson, IN
Rep. Jackie Speier, CA
Rep. Don Cazayoux, LA
Rep. Travis Childers, MS

Republican Members

Rep. Spencer Bachus, AL
Rep. Deborah Pryce, OH
Rep. Michael N. Castle, DE
Rep. Peter King, NY
Rep. Edward R. Royce, CA
Rep. Frank D. Lucas, OK
Rep. Ron Paul, TX
Rep. Steven C. LaTourette, OH
Rep. Donald A. Manzullo, IL
Rep. Walter B. Jones, NC
Rep. Judy Biggert, IL
Rep. Christopher Shays, CT
Rep. Gary G. Miller, CA
Rep. Shelley Moore Capito, WV
Rep. Tom Feeney, FL
Rep. Jeb Hensarling, TX
Rep. Scott Garrett, NJ
Rep. Ginny Brown-Waite, FL
Rep. J. Gresham Barrett, SC
Rep. Jim Gerlach, PA
Rep. Stevan Pearce, NM
Rep. Randy Neugebauer, TX
Rep. Tom Price, GA
Rep. Geoff Davis, KY
Rep. Patrick T. McHenry, NC
Rep. John Campbell, CA
Rep. Adam Putnam, FL
Rep. Michele Bachmann, MN
Rep. Peter J. Roskam, IL
Rep. Kenny Marchant, TX
Rep. Thaddeus McCotter, MI
Rep. Kevin McCarthy, CA
Rep. Dean Heller, NV