



September 26, 2018

The Honorable James Sensenbrenner
Chairman
House Judiciary Committee
Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism,
Homeland Security, and Investigations
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Sheila Jackson Lee
Ranking Member
House Judiciary Committee
Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism,
Homeland Security, and Investigations
Washington, DC 20515

Toi Hutchinson
State Senator
Illinois
President, NCSL

Jon Heining
General Counsel
Legislative Council
Texas
Staff Chair, NCSL

William Pound
Executive Director

Dear Chairman Sensenbrenner, Ranking Member Lee and Members of the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations,

On behalf of the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), the bipartisan organization representing the legislatures of our nation's states, commonwealths and territories, I write to express our support of state regulation of sports wagering. Free of federal preemption and regulation, states can now choose whether or not to allow sports wagering and if they allow sports wagering, how to regulate it. The unconstitutional Professional and Amateur Sports Protection (PASPA) Act exemplified the failings of a one-size-fits-all federal solution to complex questions of policy, regulation and law enforcement. With the shackles of federal preemption removed, states have begun creating innovative and tailored policies that represent the will of voters.

The choice to legalize sports wagering is an important policy question and must be left to each state to decide. It is important to remember that while most states have only been granted the authority to legalize sports betting recently, state lotteries, slot machines, and gaming commissions have been operating for decades. States and tribal gaming regulatory agencies already have the resources and capability to oversee the regulation of legalized sports betting. Nevada, having a unique and in-depth history with legalized, regulated sports betting will serve as an invaluable example for states on how to navigate these new waters with integrity and success.

As state legislatures begin to consider whether to allow sports wagering and if so, how it will operate in the state, you can be sure that legislatures will carefully consider the concerns of all stakeholders in establishing essential rules and regulations. By encouraging state policy innovation and unique legislative solutions, federalism is strengthened and voters are more engaged with the state legislative process. With the proper legislative tools, unhindered by federal overreach, state lawmakers will continue to craft policies that reflect the will of their constituents.

The legislative parameters for state policy innovation and determination are best set wide. Sports wagering is no exception. Federal regulation of sports wagering is not only unwarranted but reflects top-down federal activism detrimental to the fabric with which our nation's federalism values were sown. NCSL respectfully requests that you respect those values and oppose any federal legislation that would overrule state authority on sports betting.

Respectfully,

William T. Pound
Executive Director
National Conference of State Legislatures