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P R E S S R E L E A S E

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California Lottery Joins Problem Gambling Awareness Month Effort

SACRAMENTO – Every year the California Lottery joins other state and national organizations to recognize the month of March as National Problem Gambling Awareness Month (PGAM). The goal is to educate and raise public awareness that problem gambling is an addiction with similarities to the causes and consequences of alcohol and drug dependence. It also affects people from all segments of society.

This year's theme, "Don't Ignore the Signs" urges the public to recognize that problem gambling is a "hidden disease," as compulsive gamblers do not exhibit visible signs in the way individuals with other addictions do. Signs that an individual may have a gambling disorder often include depression, lying, guilt, shame and financial devastation.

While most Californians enjoy recreational gambling responsibly, an estimated one million adults of all ages, races and ethnicities from all communities in California meet the criteria for problem or disordered gambling. Popular forms of gambling include casino gambling, online wagering, the lottery, horse racing and sports wagering, among others.

During the PGAM campaign, the California Lottery and its partners also stress the importance of finding free treatment assistance for gambling disorders by calling California's 1-800-GAMBLER helpline. The helpline is staffed 24 hours, seven days a week and 365 days a year — offering callers a brief intervention and crisis stabilization to get them to the next step, which is treatment. The California Lottery partially funds 1-800-GAMBLER helpline via an Interagency Agreement with the California Department of Public Health.

Problem gambling is a treatable disease, and treatment is effective in minimizing harm to individuals, families and society as a whole. In 2010, the Office of Problem Gambling and UCLA Gambling Studies Program developed California Gambling Education and Treatment Services (CalGETS), which has now provided treatment to more than 7,000 individuals suffering negative impacts on their lives due to a gambling disorder.

Since its inception, the Lottery has remained committed to being a responsible corporate citizen that strives to ensure the highest standards of responsible gaming. In fact, the California Lottery is the only lottery in the United States to hold a Level Four Certification from the World

Lottery Association. Over the last few years, the Lottery has made several improvements to its RG program, some of which includes:

- Training 97% of its workforce on how to identify problem gambling behavior;
- Launching the first U.S. lottery industry Corporate Social Responsibility website;
- Improving treatment referral; and
- New collaborations with the California Office of Problem Gambling (OPG) and the California Council on Problem Gambling.

For more information on National Problem Gambling Month visit OPG's website <http://problemgambling.securespsites.com>. To learn more about the California Lottery's Responsible Gaming Program visit www.californialottery.com.

The California Lottery is a \$5 billion enterprise based in Sacramento. It is one of the few state agencies that is a revenue generator, not accepting taxpayer dollars. Its mission is to provide supplemental funding to California schools while simultaneously supporting local communities. In FY 2013-14, the Lottery created 89 new millionaires. Ninety-five cents of every dollar spent by our players goes back to local communities in the form of contributions to public schools and colleges, prizes and Lottery retailer compensation. The California Lottery urges its customers to play responsibly and within their budgets. If you feel you have a gambling problem, or know someone who does, you can get help at 1-800-GAMBLER.

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