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STATE LOTTERY COMMITS ONE MILLION DOLLARS TO INCREASE AWARENESS ABOUT PROBLEM GAMBLING

Campaign Will Highlight Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling's Services

Boston, MA – The Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling has launched a new public service campaign designed to raise awareness of problem gambling in the Commonwealth, and promote the availability of resources for people with gambling problems and their families.

In an exciting announcement, State Treasurer Tim Cahill pledged one million dollars from the Massachusetts Lottery's \$10 million dollar advertising budget toward building awareness around problem gambling in the State. The announcement was made at the Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling's, "2006 Massachusetts Conference on Gambling Problems: Community, Clinical and Personal Approaches," which was held at the University of Massachusetts, Boston Campus, today.

This is a significant increase from monies committed to the effort in past years. In Fiscal Years 2004 and 2005, the Lottery donated \$100,000 towards raising awareness of problem gambling programs and services. At that time Treasurer Cahill stated, "It is my hope that over time, we may increase our level of financial support to help combat problem gambling here in Massachusetts."

This year, Treasurer Cahill took the steps necessary to make that happen. "We are impressed with the one million dollar commitment, and looking forward to seeing the results of the campaign," said Kathleen M. Scanlan, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling. "The Council values the support of the Treasurer and the Lottery in helping to combat problem gambling. Treasurer Cahill understands the devastation caused by gambling problems, and the need for resources to help people."

Scanlan feels that while most state lotteries provide some support to problem gambling services in their respective communities, that a campaign of this magnitude is history in the making. "Very few other states have seen this level of financial commitment. The Massachusetts Lottery is a leader in taking this issue seriously, and being part of the solution," she said.

The Lottery's advertising agency, Hill, Holliday, Connors, Cosmopolous, is leading the creative efforts. The group has developed a radio ad, two television ads and three print ads, all of which focus on the costs and potential loss of both material possessions and family relationships due to problematic gambling.

"For the vast majority of players, lottery games are fun, affordable forms of recreation and entertainment," said Treasurer Cahill. "But for some, any form of gambling can lead to problems. The Council provides top-notch services for problem gamblers, and I am pleased to partner with the Council at an increased level of financial support to help combat compulsive gambling in Massachusetts."

The Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling is a private, non-profit health agency dedicated to reducing the social, financial and emotional costs of problem gambling by providing information and public awareness, community education and professional training, referrals to help and advocacy. For more information on the Council, call 1-800-GAM-1234 or visit www.masscompulsivegambling.org.

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