
HOUSE RESOLUTION

URGING THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS AND PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES TO ENACT LEGISLATION THAT WOULD LEGALIZE AND REGULATE ONLINE POKER.

1 WHEREAS, the game of poker is at least a few hundred years
2 old, and the popularity of poker gradually began to rise in the
3 1970s; and
4

5 WHEREAS, after online poker debuted in the late 1990s,
6 poker has grown from a niche game with a rather louche
7 reputation to a more respectable form of entertainment,
8 especially because of the mental agility and acuity the game
9 requires; and
10

11 WHEREAS, research firm Christiansen Capital Advisors
12 reported that online-poker revenues grew from \$82.7 million in
13 2001 to \$2.4 billion in 2005; and
14

15 WHEREAS, online players, the majority of whom live in the
16 United States, are expected to bet approximately \$6 billion in
17 2011; and
18

19 WHEREAS, poker can be regarded as a game of skill, because:
20

- 21 (1) The essence of the game is correct decision-making;
22
23 (2) To make the right decisions consistently, poker
24 players must employ a range of skills, including a
25 sophisticated knowledge of odds and the ability to
26 directly influence the way an individual hand turns
27 out;
28
29 (3) What is called a "bet" in poker is not really a wager
30 on a chance event but actually a maneuver or gambit



- 1 designed to provoke a desired reaction from an
- 2 opponent;
- 3
- 4 (4) Poker players use their "bets" principally to
- 5 communicate with, manipulate, and intimidate their
- 6 opponents;
- 7
- 8 (5) Novice poker players can improve their skills through
- 9 study, practice, and the accumulation of game
- 10 experience--similar to golfers and chess and bridge
- 11 players; and
- 12
- 13 (6) The existence of numerous poker schools and academies
- 14 are evidence that poker skills can be taught and
- 15 learned;
- 16

17 and

18

19 WHEREAS, online poker features characteristics that further

20 reduce the role of chance in determining outcomes in comparison

21 to live poker, such as the fact that online play typically

22 involves many more hands than an ordinary live poker match,

23 because hands are dealt much faster and many players play

24 multiple tables simultaneously; and

25

26 WHEREAS, it can be argued that online poker is not a "game

27 subject to chance" that violates the Unlawful Internet Gambling

28 Enforcement Act, 31 United States Code §§5361 et seq., and the

29 Wire Act, 18 United States Code §1084; and

30

31 WHEREAS, however, the Department of Justice continues to

32 hold the position that poker is a "game subject to chance" and

33 violates both the Unlawful Internet Gambling Enforcement Act and

34 the Wire Act; and

35

36 WHEREAS, the legalization and regulation of online poker

37 could generate much-needed revenues for government at both the

38 state and federal levels; now, therefore,

39

40 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the

41 Twenty-sixth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session



H.R. NO. 110

1 of 2011, that Congress and the President are urged to enact
2 legislation that would fully legalize and regulate online poker
3 in order to:

4
5 (1) Remove any ambiguities and concerns on the part of
6 players and law-enforcement agencies about whether
7 online poker is a form of gambling that violates the
8 law; and

9
10 (2) Enable the state and federal governments to generate
11 much-needed revenues to carry out their
12 responsibilities;

13
14 and

15
16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
17 Resolution be transmitted to each member of Hawaii's
18 Congressional delegation, the President Pro Tempore and Minority
19 Leader of the United States Senate, the Speaker and Minority
20 Leader of the United States House of Representatives, and the
21 President of the United States.

22
23
24

OFFERED BY:



MAR 14 2011

