



January 10, 2011

To whom it may concern:

I am writing this unsolicited letter on behalf of the application provided by the Reno Problem Gambling Center, in order to provide a bit of research-based background on their efforts. I serve as the Principal Investigator on the Nevada Problem Gambling Project, an independent academic follow-up evaluation of all state-funded problem gambling programs. In this context, our research team has uncovered some very impressive data I would like to share with you.

First, the Reno Problem Gambling Center is unafraid to subject their approaches to independent, scholarly evaluations – an exceedingly positive sign for any organization, of course. In fact, this clinic was highlighted as a star in the final report, and should be commended for the large scope of their clinical reach and their enthusiastic participation to our follow-up research.

Second, the treatment participants we interviewed provided very positive assessments in an impressive variety of spheres -- including access to services, treatment quality and helpfulness, treatment effectiveness, and overall ratings of the quality of service. We found that almost all participants have reduced their levels of gambling since completing treatment. Importantly, the data also suggested that these reductions were strongly associated with 1) their overall rating of the quality of services at Reno PGC, 2) their ability to get all the services they thought they needed at Reno PGC, 3) feeling a bond with their counselor at Reno PGC, and 4) liking the services they received from Reno PGC.

Ultimately, clients expressed feelings of self-awareness, acceptance, achievement, and hope after completing their treatment. Participants indicated that their programs helped to increase their confidence, empower them, give them the strength to avoid gambling, and in many cases, saved their lives. Given these clients' desperate statuses when they arrived, these are dramatic improvements indeed. These strong outcomes represent a genuine victory for Reno PGC – and super-emphasize how vital continued financial support is, especially during the current economic downturn. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bo J. Bernhard". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "B" and a long, sweeping underline.

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