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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

March 4, 2013

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The Maryland Lottery Promotes National Problem Gambling Awareness Week

(Baltimore) – The Maryland Lottery and Gaming Control Agency (LGCA) is taking part in the 11th annual National Problem Gambling Awareness Week, which is running through March 9. The campaign's goal is to educate the public and healthcare professionals about the warning signs of problem gambling and to raise awareness about the help that is available, both locally and nationally. The campaign is led by the [National Council on Problem Gambling \(NCPG\)](#), a national advocate for programs and services to assist problem gamblers and their families. This year's theme is "Problem Gambling: A New Understanding of a Community Concern."

The LGCA has taken a proactive role in addressing problem gambling issues. In late 2010, at the behest of Lottery Director Stephen Martino, the [Maryland Alliance for Responsible Gambling \(MARG\)](#) was formed. MARG is comprised of Maryland state agencies involved in problem gambling issues, not-for-profit organizations, Maryland legislators and the state's casinos. MARG works to promote responsible gambling awareness and provide resources for problem gamblers as well as for their friends and families.

MARG's website, mdgamblinghelp.org, highlights the resources available throughout the state, including a 24-hour, toll-free helpline; educational materials; a counselor search; and information about the Maryland Lottery's Voluntary Exclusion Program (VEP). A tool of personal responsibility, the [voluntary exclusion program](#) allows problem gamblers to ban themselves from Maryland casinos. Its success has led the LGCA to prepare a similar program, launching this spring, for the traditional lottery. "We want to ensure that Marylanders with a gambling problem have access to the programs and support they need to deal with it responsibly and proactively," Martino said. "That's why it is important to use this week to bring awareness to the numerous resources available to create positive change in our community."

During National Problem Gambling Awareness Week, the LGCA will be blogging on its casino website, slots.mdlottery.com, and posting statistics and information regarding gambling on Facebook and Twitter. In addition, special messaging will be featured at the more than 4,200 Lottery retail locations across Maryland, via the agency's Lottery InMotion™ monitor screens.

"This is an opportunity to reach out and bring further awareness to the issues of problem gambling," Martino said. "We always encourage people to set limits and play responsibly."

Since its inception in 1973, the Maryland Lottery has awarded more than \$19.8 billion in prizes to players and \$12.8 billion in revenue to the State of Maryland. One of Maryland's largest revenue sources, the

Lottery supports important state programs and services including education, public safety and health, human resources and the environment. For more information, go to mdlottery.com.

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