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**Massachusetts Gaming Commission Hires  
Mark Vander Linden as Director of Research and Problem Gambling**  
*A Nationally –Renowned Treatment and Prevention Expert to Lead Commission’s  
Responsible Gambling Initiatives and Strategic Partnerships*

Today the Massachusetts Gaming Commission (MGC) announces the appointment of problem gambling treatment and prevention specialist, Mark Vander Linden, as Director of Research and Problem Gambling. Mr. Vander Linden was hired by MGC’s Executive Director Rick Day after a lengthy and diligent search for the most experienced candidate. As MGC’s Director of Research and Problem Gambling, Mr. Vander Linden will oversee all MGC research efforts and serve as the head of MGC’s Office of Compulsive and Problem Gambling. In this role, Mr. Vander Linden will research, develop and recommend the most effective and innovative programs designed to prevent, educate and treat compulsive and problem gambling in the Commonwealth.

Mr. Vander Linden is currently the Executive Officer in the Office of Problem Gambling Treatment and Prevention at the Iowa Department of Public Health. He is also currently the Board President at the Association of Problem Gambling Service Administrators and on the Board of Directors for the National Center for Responsible Gaming.

As MGC Director of Research and Problem Gambling, Vander Linden will be responsible for reviewing the compulsive gambling plans and procedures for all entities that submit gaming applications to MGC and for coordinating with the Department of Public Health and the Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling to implement the provisions of the Gaming Act among many other duties and responsibilities as it relates to all aspects of MGC’s proactive initiatives to address concerns related to compulsive and problem gambling.

Mr. Vander Linden has more than 15 years of experience in social work and also a specialized focus in national and international gaming policy and research. Currently as Executive Officer in the Office of Problem Gambling Treatment and Prevention at the Iowa Department of Public Health, Vander Linden directs all aspects of problem gambling services for the state including treatment, prevention, marketing, research and training.

Executive Director Day stated, “We are very pleased to appoint Mark Vander Linden to this very important role at the gaming commission. Mr. Vander Linden has a remarkable track record of more than 15 years of accomplishment in this area of expertise. I am confident that Mr. Vander Linden’s in-depth knowledge will make him uniquely qualified and also a valuable member of the MGC team.”



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Marlene Warner, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling, stated, “Mark Vander Linden is a top-notch professional in the field of problem gambling. Very few individuals are expert on the issues surrounding prevention, treatment, regulation and research all related to problem gambling and can easily navigate conversations and work between these varied groups of professionals, but Mark can.’ Warner added, “It was a real achievement for the MGC to secure Mark in this role and the Mass. Council on Compulsive Gambling is eager to work on building comprehensive problem gambling services across the Commonwealth with him.”

In reaction to his new role at MGC, Mr. Vander Linden said, “I’m thrilled to join the MGC and become a part of this groundbreaking work. In my experience I haven’t seen anywhere in the United States a more thoughtful plan to address problem gambling and the related health and social issues. Massachusetts is clearly on the right track as they move to expand gaming in the next few years.”

Prior to his role as Executive Officer in Iowa, Vander Linden held a position as Clinical Supervisor at the Mid-Eastern Council on Chemical Abuse and several other positions in various social work capacities. In addition to board positions held with the Association of Problem Gambling Service Administrators and the National Center for Responsible Gaming, Vander Linden has been an active board member to Midwest Consortium on Problem Gambling and Substance Abuse.

Vander Linden earned a *Masters of Social Welfare* from the University of California at Berkley. He also holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Social Work from the University of Iowa.

### **About MGC**

The mission of the Massachusetts Gaming Commission is to create a fair, transparent, and participatory process for implementing the expanded gaming law passed by the Legislature and signed by the Governor in November, 2011. In creating that process, the Commission will strive to ensure that its decision-making and regulatory systems engender the confidence of the public and participants, and that they provide the greatest possible economic development benefits and revenues to the people of the Commonwealth, reduce to the maximum extent possible the potentially negative or unintended consequences of the new legislation, and allow an appropriate return on investment for gaming providers that assures the operation of casino-resorts of the highest quality. For more information on MGC, please visit [MassGaming.com](http://MassGaming.com) or connect and share on Twitter (@MassGamingComm) or Facebook ([www.facebook.com/MAGamingComm](http://www.facebook.com/MAGamingComm)).



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