

Rep. Allen: Issues statement on so-called “regulation” of Fantasy Sports

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It is fantasy to believe that one has the skill to accurately predict outcomes of future events.

Fantasy sports are games of chance and not, as some would suggest, games of skill. Placing a financial wager on a game of chance is gambling. Gambling in Wisconsin, with some constitutional exceptions, is illegal.

Injuries in sports are random and occur with a degree of regularity. They can happen at any point in a game. Injuries can greatly influence the outcome of a game and the outcome of any contest based on player statistics.

Player decisions are influenced by game situations and are intended to be prudent actions to preserve a victory. We respect the selfless player who ignores individual statistics in favor of the greater team victory. Game-time decisions by athletes are unpredictable and can influence that player's end-of-game statistics.

A head coach's decisions on game strategy and play selection may be based on personnel available on his team or the opponent's team as well as unique game situations. These decisions, while fun to speculate about or second-guess, are often impossible to predict.

Some people are interested in legalizing fantasy sports gambling in Wisconsin. Given the great number of people playing fantasy sports, it may be a timely and relevant debate. The debate, however, should be about a constitutional amendment that would expand gambling in the state of Wisconsin.

Instead, advocates are trying to legalize the expansion of gambling through a back-door approach. The advocates are trying to suggest that placing financial wagers on fantasy sports is not gambling. They suggest that it is a game of skill, and therefore, does not fall under the definition of gambling. To legitimize their claim these advocates are advancing legislation that would regulate businesses that provide online platforms in fantasy sports. This effort is, I guess, designed to “protect consumers.”

Does it make sense to regulate an illegal activity before it is legal?

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