

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2017

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HOUSE BILL 1066

Short Title: Study Predatory Game Practices. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Harrison, Fisher, Insko, and Belk (Primary Sponsors).

For a complete list of sponsors, refer to the North Carolina General Assembly web site.

Referred to: Appropriations

June 1, 2018

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT TO DIRECT THE OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL TO STUDY
PREDATORY GAME PRACTICES THAT TARGET MINORS AND ENCOURAGE
GAMBLING.

Whereas, as many as 91% of children between the ages of two and 17 play video games, and as many as half of all Americans play video games; and

Whereas, the video gaming industry generated approximately \$36 billion in the United States in 2017; software and in-game purchases and subscriptions made up about 81% of that amount; and

Whereas, many video game publishers have begun using mechanisms that allow players to make in-game purchases that offer to enhance gameplay and chances of winning game content, and the opportunity to purchase "loot boxes," which often provide video game content that can be purchased, but the content is provided in a random fashion, similar to a slot machine; and

Whereas, the American Psychological Association has identified "Internet Gaming Disorder" as an emerging diagnosis warranting further study in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5); and

Whereas, children are particularly vulnerable to the psychological impact from the marketing of in-game purchases and other items marketed to video game consumers and, often, are specifically targeted by that marketing, which has potential psychological, addictive, and financial risks; and

Whereas, unlike other forms of gambling, lotteries, and games of chance, no meaningful disclosure requirements or other protection for minors currently exists in this State; Now, therefore,

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. The Office of the Attorney General shall conduct a study of predatory game practices, particularly as those practices impact minor children in this State. The Office shall consider any available data relating to the psychological impact of targeted marketing in video games, including the incidence of addictions and disorders related to targeted marketing within video games. The Office shall consider legislation from other states and jurisdictions and may consult with any other State agencies as appropriate. The Office shall submit a report, and any legislative recommendations, to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Justice and Public Safety and the Fiscal Research Division on or before January 1, 2019.



1 **SECTION 2.** Notwithstanding G.S. 143C-5-2, there is appropriated from the
2 General Fund to the Office of the Attorney General the sum of twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000)
3 for the purpose of conducting the study and report described in this act.
4 **SECTION 3.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2018.