

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2017

H.B. 1066
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HOUSE PRINCIPAL CLERK

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HOUSE BILL DRH40740-MQa-141

Short Title: Study Predatory Game Practices. (Public)

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

Referred to:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

25 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

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

34 **SECTION 2.** Notwithstanding G.S. 143C-5-2, there is appropriated from the
35 General Fund to the Office of the Attorney General the sum of twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000)
36 for the purpose of conducting the study and report described in this act.



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SECTION 3. This act becomes effective July 1, 2018.