Resolution on Mobile Sports Betting

WHEREAS, current studies demonstrate that an increase in participation in online mobile sports betting leads to negative societal impacts, including financial loss, increased addiction rates and violence; and

WHEREAS, Scripture calls God's people to "seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper (Jeremiah 29:7)"; and

WHEREAS, Scripture commands us to "Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy" (Proverbs 31:8–9), warns against those who exploit the vulnerable for profit (Proverbs 22:22–23; Micah 2:1–2) and pronounces woe upon those who use unjust systems to enrich themselves at the expense of others (Isaiah 10:1–2); and

WHEREAS, Scripture warns, "Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil" (1 Timothy 6:9-10), and Jesus warned, "Be on your guard against all kinds of greed" (Luke 12:15); and

WHEREAS, the multi-billion-dollar mobile sports betting industry is lobbying to expand into Texas, which will lead to the exploitation of Texans, especially young men, who are the targets of mobile sports betting advertising; and

WHEREAS, mobile sports betting promotes "micro-betting," creating dopamine loops that are designed to be highly addictive; and

WHEREAS, the Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission (CLC) has faithfully stood in the gap at the Texas Capitol to protect vulnerable Texans from the gambling industry. Therefore, be it

RESOLVED, Texas Baptists condemn the predatory practices of the mobile sports betting industry and its targeting of young men; and be it further

RESOLVED, that we commend and fully support the ongoing work of the Christian Life Commission in Austin as they advocate for policies that protect the vulnerable and oppose any legislative efforts to legalize or expand sports betting; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we call upon Texas Baptists churches to recognize mobile gambling as a severe and growing addiction and urge them to graciously and directly address it within their congregations, and pray for those who are caught in its grip.