

Personal submission on the 'Inquiry into online gambling and its impacts on problem gamblers'

Australians lose on gambling more money per capita than any other country in the world. With over \$24Billion being lost every year. This is nearly \$1,000 per person every single year. This is unacceptable in these trying economic times, where the pressures of rising costs of living are becoming so acute.

Clearly, we are a nation of gambling losers, and something needs to be done to change this. Almost everyone has uninhibited access to the internet. This is a huge issue when combined with the documented fact that gambling can be extremely addictive.

Before the internet was so prevalent, you would have to physically go into a betting store or talk to someone on the phone to place a bet. Now you can place as many bets you want, as quickly as your internet's speed will allow. Our world has changed and therefore the rules on gambling need to keep up with the times.

The pace of gambling and by extension, money being lost, is currently unrestricted and constantly accelerating due to the internet and its increasing prevalence. Therefore, I would argue that this pace of gambling needs to be drastically reduced and the only way to do that is to ban online gambling.

Gambling companies do not care about the Australian public whatsoever. Their business model relies on taking money out of people's pockets. If left unrestricted they will simply leech as much money as possible from the public. These are morally

bad companies that profit from harming people, in the same way as tobacco companies. We don't let tobacco companies advertise their products in Australia, so why are gambling companies treated differently? I call for all forms of gambling advertising to be made illegal.

In summary, gambling companies impoverish and socially harm the Australian public. They provide no benefit other than tax revenue, which is offset by the huge amounts of money that the public loses on gambling and the social damage caused by impoverishing people. Therefore, just like tobacco companies, gambling companies should be treated as the negative entity that they are.

My proposals are:

- **A total ban on gambling advertising** in Australia, in the same way that tobacco companies cannot advertise their products.
- **A total ban on online gambling.** When compared to older options the public had for placing a bet (face-to-face, mail, over the phone), the internet is exponentially more complex and harder to regulate. The only way to effectively regulate online gambling is to outright ban it. If gambling is going to be treated as a negative social issue in the same way as tobacco usage, it makes sense to remove gambling companies' largest avenue of profit.
- **An annual increase in the tax rate levied on gambling companies.** Similar to how the taxation of tobacco constantly increases every year. This would eventually render gambling companies unprofitable and see their removal from Australian society. This would happen in a gradual manner that would cause less disruption and abrupt job-losses than if they were completely banned at once.