

My understanding of some of the facts:

- “Australia has the highest gambling losses per capita of any country in the world. Last year, Australians gambled away approximately \$25bn (That is now almost \$1,000 per person, incl. children, per year). We have less than 0.5% of the world’s population, but almost 20% of its poker machines.
- Successive governments have failed to significantly curb betting advertising, resulting in gambling ads being played 948 times a day on free-to-air TV in Victoria alone. This doesn’t count online ads, which exist in the same ecosystem as the fastest-growing form of gambling addiction – online sports betting.”
Source: Marcus Today, Newsletter, Mid-November 2022
- All online gambling / betting applications (apps) are designed to
 - o Pull money out of the pockets of the punters into the app operators (and be default the taxing government authorities) bank accounts to the great detriment of the punters and the overall economy. (Apart from wasting billions of dollars p.a, imagine the opportunity cost of wasted time and productivity spend on these apps.)
 - o Addict the gambler to the ‘games / bets’ through ever increasing ‘bells and whistles’ that create the illusion of winning on occasions, while ignoring the much more regular and often consistent losses.
 - o Creating the illusion of ‘fun and social inclusion’, when at the end often the opposite is the reality with some gamblers / betters getting into huge financial misery and losing / destroying all or many relationships.

I am wondering, why we need another parliamentary inquiry into this matter, where the playbook has been written several times before on how best to deal with addictive products and services in the market.

(One thing we know that DOES NOT work is prohibition!!! It has never worked on anything throughout the history of mankind – it just drives the behaviour underground, increases the prices of the products, and creates more problems than it can prevent.)

1. Without getting into all the intricate details, may I suggest the working group of the committee examines thoroughly the many great suggestions and policies coming out of **regulating other ‘addictive’ substances like nicotine and alcohol.**
2. Some of the easiest, most common sense, and clearly working solutions that can be applied to online gambling are:
 - a. **Increases taxes on all online (and physical) gambling apps significantly** over time until an ongoing reduction of effected people and addictive behaviour is clearly visible in the statistics.
 - b. **Ban all advertising of addictive products and behaviours anywhere / anytime across the country, including online advertising in Australia,** where the Parliament has jurisdiction
 - c. Use some or all of the additional tax revenue from increased taxes to **educate the population about the dangers of the respective gambling products and their negative impacts on individuals** and society.
3. For online gambling specifically, the government could create a requirement that with every opening of the app (and then in regular intervals, like 5, 10,

15, 30 or 60 minutes) a **pop up** comes up with **gambling warnings**, as we have on cigarette packets (or some alcoholic beverages), like:

- “Gambling is bad for your mental health
- Most gambler lose in the long run
- Gamble responsibly
- Set yourself time limits (or stop losses)”
- etc, etc

where the gambler / player actively has to click ‘Accept’ to progress to the operation of the gambling app.

4. An even harsher interference could be to require online gambling apps operating in Australia **to force users to set a time and / or ‘stop-loss’ limit** and when either is reached the app shuts down and can’t be activated for another hour / day or week.
5. Once you have done your good work, it is also important to **review the initial regulation regularly**, because, no doubt, over time the online gambling industry and/or technology will find ways around any regulation the government imposes at any time.

Yours sincerely

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