

Interactive Gambling Amendment Bill 2016

Hi,

I wish for this email to be a submission for the Interactive Gaming Amendment Bill 2016

This is regarding the stance on specifically the area of online poker

I write this on behalf of myself that plays the game professionally and full time.

I feel that any stance excluding reputable online poker operators (such as Pokerstars, 888 Poker and Party Poker) from servicing the Australian market is anti-free market, anti-business and most importantly anti-consumer as it will force Australian consumers wishing to play online poker to play on shady unregulated online poker sites. This situation has led to fraud and theft against consumers from unlicensed and unregulated online poker companies in countries around the world that have banned online poker rather than licensing and regulating it.

Excluding an online operator such as Pokerstars will severely impact on my livelihood and wellbeing. My income comes mainly from playing poker.

In the US, poker professionals are a recognized profession. If online poker does not exist here, I believe the government will be turning down potential revenue stream in licensing and regulating reputable online poker providers.

Unlike other forms of gambling, which I'm strictly opposed to, many academic studies including Australian Productivity Commission's report in 2009 shows that poker is a game of skill and not just luck. The Cepheus Poker Project in the University of Alberta aims to develop further understanding of poker strategy by solving one of the variants of

poker: <http://poker.srv.ualberta.ca/> with quantitative mathematical analysis and artificial intelligence.

As modern poker theory evolves, it has been understood that poker involves a huge variety of skillset and knowledge, ranging from physiological pattern recognition, behavioral psychology, Nash equilibrium strategy, mathematical combinatorics, deductive reasoning that is useful in many other areas such as forensics, economics, social psychology, mathematics. Banning online poker would potentially hinder Australia's advancement in these areas and I consider this to be a great intellectual loss for our country.

The poker industry in Australia is well developed and a significant market, any radical changes will have consequences and affect the lives of many of our citizens. Please take this into consideration,

With regards,

Mostafa Haidar