

SUBMISSION FOR AOPA.

To whom it may concern.

I have been playing the game of poker for close to 15 years I use the game of poker as a hobby.

I used to play in the casino before I found out about online poker I use to spend a lot more money than I could afford in the casino.

I used to get suckered in to playing slot machines that had a beautiful brand-new car sitting there beside the machines or a brand-new motor cycle or a sign saying you could win this house or you could win the 1million dollar jack pot.

Do you know anyone a friend/a friend of a friend that has won a million dollars or a new \$100,000 car playing in a casino? I sure haven't.

The casino gives everyone the option of opening an account where you receive a card the card goes into the slot machine and keeps track of the amount you have spent you need to make 50pts to reach your goal in return you get free parking on you next visit \$7,50c worth of food and \$10 on your next visit of free slot credits.

But to reach this amount of 50 pts you need to spend roughly \$200-\$250 dollars which is a lot of money to me, once you have spent that amount and made your 50 pts you only have 1 week to use your bonus if you do not go back within the next week you lose your bonus which is a bit unfair since you did spend the \$200-\$250 dollars.

This system the casino uses is done in a way to get the customers back in their doors

And spend more money, for people who are not on large salary or have a family this could be very costly to them.

And for people who live in rural areas and do not have access to a casino they use online as there way of playing poker I would assume it would be the same for people that are in wheel chairs or single mothers with young children.

Online allows me to play small limit to minimise my loses I can play 1c/2c games if I like were as at the casinos the minimum game they offer is \$1-\$2 which you need \$250-\$300.

Which is a lot of money for me to spend on a hobby 3-4 x a week with 2 small children.

The minimum tournament at the casino is \$90 where was online you can play a tournament for as low as 10c and there are also free games for being a loyal costumer with a prize pool up to \$300.

You need a lot of spare time to play poker in a casino to travel I would need 25/30 min to get to the casino then I would need \$50 just for parking which is outrageous then you need

to add your name to a waiting list in the casino and depending on what day of the week it is you could end up waiting up to 1 hr + to be seated.

By the time you get your stack of chips and sit at your table I would have spent over 1hr + close to 2hr, Before I get to play my 1st hand and I would need to spend \$50 for parking before I get to play 1 hand, in that time frame I could have played 1,500-1.800 hands of poker online I normally spend about 2-3 hrs on each session online I play 3-4 times a week.

The participation of Australian in online poker.

Australians have been playing the game of poker as a hobby or to past time with friend at home since a deck of cards was invented.

Australians playing online seems to be growing each year I have been playing online since 2011 on 2-3 different sites and have notice a lot of new Australian player joining the sites.

I have become friends with some of the Australian players that I have met online some of the players have just started learning the game right up to players in their older years up to 82 years old, we use skype as a group to talk about strategy's and new ways to learn and stay ahead of the game and have some enjoyment and talk about different situation in different hands and a way of interacting with other players that want to learn the game of poker.

In the game of poker, you will learn to be a patient person you will also sharpen your math skills and you will also learn to take a loss without it affecting you mentally, were as in a casinos people lose money on slot machine and black jack tables and other games and it affect them mentally and it affects the amount they have spent.

- a. the nature and extent of any personal or social harms and benefits arising from participating in online poker; and
- b. whether the current regulatory approach the recently amended *Interactive Gambling Act 2001*, is a reasonable and proportionate response to those harms and benefits.

If online poker does get banned in Australia it will affect me personally because it will leave me with no option but to have to go to a casino to play my hobby and I would have to spend a massive amount of money that I don't really have.

I will also lose touch with the players I have become friend with online in our skype group.

The benefit I get from playing online poker is I get to save a lot of time at the same time I am doing it from home where I can help if anything is needed from my wife or children, where as I am unavailable to them if I am at the casino.

I will also be **saving a massive amount** of money that can be going to the weekly shopping bills or other house hold bills.

It would be beneficial to everyone involved if the Australian Government used the same model that England has put in place, England has used a model where they give a license to these big company's and tax them and create revenue which is a win/win situation for the Australian Government and the players.

Banning online poker will drive out the big reputable sites that give the players piece of mind knowing that their funds are well secured with these big sites that are on the stock market, the players are also secured legally because these sites are obeying Australian laws.

Banning these big reputable sites will only **open the door to dodgy illegal operators** and the **BLACK MARKET** that are not following the Australian laws and are able to shut their site down at any time and steal the players funds and leaving the players with **NO LEAGLE ACTION** since both parties are not following Australian laws.

I am sure the AOPA will supply the study's done by Dr sally Ginsbury showing online poker is the least form of gambling that leads to problem gambling.

We are in 2017 and everything now days has something to do with computer before I found online poker I didn't know anything about using a computer I had no idea what a file was or a folder but I have learnt to use a computer by trial and error because I started playing poker online.

We are meant to be the great Australian country that tells the rest of the world we are the home of the free and brave, that take all citizen issues seriously.

Now we have a Government telling us adults what hobby's we can and can't play with our own hard earnt money.

Some people will follow the laws and other will still be playing on all the dodgy illegal sites that will take the places of these reputable sites and in the end the Australian tax paying players will be worse off and so will the Government who will be losing revenue.

Third world country offer online poker to their citizens, when I speak to other players around the world about this issue most of them a gob smack that a great country like Australia might being going down the wrong path.

We allow people to go by lotto tickets and scratch tickets or allow people to bet on sports that the better has no control over but say no to poker which is a game the player has control over.

The amendment wasn't put in place to take online poker away from Australian players it is other forms of gambling that is the problem and it is unfortunate that online poker falls

into this category and we who love the game must fight for it in a way we never thought this issue would happen in Australia in the 21st century.

There is a good solution to this problem that makes everyone involved happy and that is to legalise poker and give out licenses to these big company's and tax them and the government will generate revenue and at the same time the players are secured knowing they are playing on regulated sites who are operating within the laws of our country.

If we as Australians go backwards on an issue like this what hope do people like same sex marriages have? Or people who care about the environment and want to get rid of plastic bags have.

The list of issues I could add would be a long 1 so I'll leave it at that and hope common sense prevails.

Yours Sincerely