

To whom it may concern,

My name is Josh McCully I'm 22 and based on the _____ and have been playing online poker for approximately 3 years. I was first introduced to the game whilst studying at University of Queensland in Brisbane whilst juggling 2 other jobs. I was at the point where I needed to find an alternative source of income so I explored my options via the internet and online poker seemed appealing. I had previously played with friends both free to play versions of poker and in a casual live setting, but nothing of a serious nature.

Poker is not only a fascinating game but it allows anyone and everyone to participate from all walks of life. You are able to play behind your computer screen at any time of the day across multiple networks whether you have a disability or CEO of a multimillion-dollar company. Moreover, it has provided countless Australians the opportunity to make money and more importantly for entertainment purposes.

Fortunately for myself online poker has helped supplement my income for the past 2 years whilst I have been cultivating my skills in the workforce. This is due to the fact that poker is a dynamic and evolving game in which if you apply yourself and take it like a profession you have the opportunity to be a profitable player. I have looked at online poker as a profession, in which I have vigorously studied the game amongst all its facets in order for me to gain the biggest edge over my competition. For the general populous poker has been portrayed as a game for gamblers and/or degenerates thus being and attached to the gambling industry due to its element of luck. Although this is true the vast majority of poker players apply skilful thinking and sound strategy.

Conversely the negative effects of online poker can be that people are less inclined to socialise and its usually conducted by oneself. Another factor that could cause long term negative affects is sitting behind your computer screen for an extended period of time. Although this may be true, by keeping a balance and healthy lifestyle this can be mitigated in addition to avoid being sedentary for these extended periods.

I believe that online poker being attached to the Interactive Gambling Amendment Bill should be rectified due to it having an element of skill compared to casino games that are based purely on chance/luck. If the government was to ban online poker this would mean that either the professional or serious poker players would either have to play on the unregulated sites or relocate to another country. Due to it being legal in any live setting it would seem unjust to ban it due to it being caught up in a bill because of poker being in the gambling industry. By playing on these unregulated sites Australians will be risking money and possibly identity to play the game that they are passionate about. This is why it seems unjust to ban online poker when you are legally able to play in casinos, pubs and other venues. These businesses are not only profiting from poker but other gambling platforms which have negative repercussion to any addicted or potential gambling related issues.

In summary, I strongly believe that online poker should remain legal in Australia so it can be enjoyed by many for years to come. Although there are negatives affects to playing online poker for the individual it has provided more positives and opportunities for anyone looking to earn an additional income or just for the simple enjoyment to come home from work and be able to play your favourite card game. Hopefully this message can demonstrate my passion about the game that I have spent thousands of hours playing to improve and become the best version of myself as a poker player.

Thanks in advance...

Kind Regards Josh McCully