

Monday 8 July 2024

The Hon Anthony Albanese MP  
Prime Minister  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600  
By email: [a.albanese.mp@aph.gov.au](mailto:a.albanese.mp@aph.gov.au)

Dear Prime Minister,

**RE: You win some, you lose more**

Gambler's Help financial counsellors in Victoria provide more than 1,500 Victorians with financial counselling assistance each year. They use specialist skills and knowledge to reduce the impacts that gambling harm has on individuals and families, providing a critical layer of support to vulnerable Victorians.

As the peak body for Victorian financial counsellors, our members report to us how their gambling harm clients almost always present with comorbidities and underlying issues including poor mental health, family violence, and drug and alcohol addiction. It is also well understood that gambling contributes to major risk factors, such as financial loss and relationship breakdown, which are associated with suicide.

The human impact of gambling harm is immense – not just for the individual, but for their family, friends and networks.

To minimise this harm and the flow-on long-term economic and social impacts of gambling harm, on behalf of more than 350 Victorian financial counsellors, I urge the Federal Government to implement the 31 recommendations of the 'You win some, you lose more' report from the *Inquiry into online gambling and its impacts on those experiencing gambling harm*, released a year ago.

In particular, the recommendation relating to implementing a full gambling ad ban over three years is crucial. Financial counsellors are reporting that younger clients are finding that gambling advertising has been rebranded to be part of their 'normal life' on social media, to bet with mates on anything and everything. As society becomes more digital, it is crucial that government responses adapt to these new advertising tactics that aim to entice younger generations through normalisation of gambling.

Financial counsellors have suggested that the model for tobacco advertising could be emulated, which for years has meant our TV, radio and digital screens are free of ads for a legal but dangerous adult product.

We know that if people want to gamble, they'll find a way. However, government has a role to play in reducing the risk of normalising gambling in society through advertising, and to better regulate a gambling industry taking billions in profits, returning only harm.

Now is the time to act. Australia can be a global leader for good, not the global leader in gambling losses.

I invite you to contact me on [zylhw@fcvic.org.au](mailto:zylhw@fcvic.org.au) or 0448 565 552 to arrange a time to meet to discuss implementation of the recommendations of this important report.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Zyl', with a horizontal line underneath.

Zyl Hovenga-Wauchope  
Executive Officer  
Financial Counselling Victoria

*Note: This letter is supported by the FCVic Gambling Issues Working Group, which aims to improve financial counselling practice and address structural and systemic issues relating to gambling harm.*