



CANADIAN
PSYCHOLOGICAL
ASSOCIATION
SOCIÉTÉ
CANADIENNE
DE PSYCHOLOGIE

March 7, 2024

Senator Marty Deacon
Senate of Canada
Ottawa ON K1A 0A4
Marty.Deacon@sen.parl.gc.ca

Re: Support for Senate Bill S-269

Dear Senator Deacon:

The Canadian Psychological Association (CPA) is the national voice for the science, practice, and education of psychology in Canada. With more than 7,000 members and affiliates, the CPA is Canada's largest association for psychology and represents psychologists in public and private practice, private industry, academia, and research, as well as students. We write to express our strong support for Bill S-269, and for the practice of banning the advertisement of gambling more generally.

Critically, addictions linked to gambling are every bit as serious as the addictions linked to smoking, cannabis, or alcohol; all of which have restrictions in terms of how and where they can advertise. When we restrict the marketing of a substance or activity, we send a clear signal to the people of Canada that there are risks inherent in that activity.

We certainly do not push these activities on the population and especially not in contexts where we know our children will be directly and deeply impacted. Doing so is working directly against efforts to prevent mental health issues.

The extent to which the marketing of gambling has been interwoven with sports broadcasting "pushes" gambling in the most psychologically nefarious way, by normalizing it and glorifying it (see the Weaponization of Psychology at BanAdsForGambling.ca).

Statistics Canada reports that almost two-thirds of Canadians reported gambling last year, with over 300,000 Canadians at moderate to severe risk of problematic gambling and the National Council on Problem Gambling reports that the risk of gambling addiction grew by 30% in the last 3 years.

141 ave Laurier Ave
Quest/West
Suite #702
Ottawa, Ontario
K1P 5J3
613.237.2144
1.888.472.0657

Fax: 613.237.1674

Email/Courriel:
cpa@cpa.ca
cpa.ca

For many parents, involving their children in sports is a fantastic way to help them develop the core skills of success and personal growth. These lessons benefit them throughout their lives, helping them to become better citizens.

Now though, arenas are adorned with sports gambling ads, as are our playing fields and even at times the sports uniforms players' wear. Our fields of play, many funded by tax revenue, are being overshadowed by the continual temptation and the normalization and glorification of very dangerous gambling behaviours.

Within a period of years, the world has transformed into one in which a parent cannot watch sport with their children, or have their children participate in sport, without also silently and insidiously indoctrinating them into the world of gambling, whether they want to or not. A world within which a few innocent bets can quickly lead one to "chase wins" as they accumulate losses. Sport should be a societal positive, like the arts and education. We must not let the goodness of sport be overshadowed by a predatory force that increases the rates of mental illness experienced by Canadians.

The CPA calls on The Senate of Canada to support Bill S-269 and to follow other countries by banning the marketing of gambling in Canada. Doing so protects our children, and our population more generally, from those trying to push a dangerous behaviour through inescapable and relentless marketing efforts. We ask you to prioritize the mental health of the people of Canada over the capitalist goals of the gambling industry by passing Bill S-269.

Yours sincerely,



Lisa Votta-Bleeker, Ph.D.
Chief Executive Officer
Canadian Psychological Association

CC: /

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada

The Honourable Carla Qualtrough, Minister of Sport and Physical Activity

The Honourable Ya'ara Saks, Minister of Mental Health and Addictions

The Honourable François-Philippe Champagne, Minister of Innovation, Science & Industry

The Honourable Mark Holland, Minister of Health

The Honourable Karina Gould, Minister of Families, Children and Social Development

The Honourable Marci Ien, Minister of Women and Gender Equality and Youth

The Honourable Pascale St-Onge, Minister of Canadian Heritage

Senator Brent Cotter