

Copy of the letter from Gavin Fineff to Prime Minister Albanese

Dear Prime Minister and Members of Parliament,

My name is Gavin Fineff and I'm writing to you from in prison. I am serving a sentence of nine years after pleading guilty to gambling away millions of other people's money.

A gambling addiction can't be used as an excuse for harming others. However, research shows approximately 80% of gambling addicts commit crime.

Consequently, people continue to be harmed. That's why I believe we need to tackle gambling addiction properly in this country, and this has become my life's work.

In June 2023, a parliamentary committee lead by the late MP Peta Murphy delivered their recommendations in relation to gambling harm in their report 'You Win Some, You Lose More. The committee's inquiries were extensive and the evidence it uncovered was explosive. At the core of their recommendations was that public health must be prioritised.

Online gambling has rapidly fuelled gambling addiction in Australia with fast bets, fast losses, and fast transfers. The committee made a number of evidenced-based recommendations that would reverse the current situation. I implore you to accept and legislate for every recommendation.

The lack of legislative responsibility on gambling companies is embarrassing. In one absurd aspect of my experience, three gambling companies are holding millions of dollars of proceeds of crime, still refusing to return it to victims... If someone steals your wallet and gives that wallet to someone else the police will take that wallet and return it to you. Money stolen and given to gambling companies should be treated no differently.

The gambling companies know they are cultivating and exploiting addicts like the one I had. It's part of their unspoken business model. This has to stop before even more innocent people are harmed.

But surely there are other things parliament can do right now, to provide all Australians with significantly more protection from gambling harm. Please read the committee report and legislate each of its recommendations

Sincerely,

Gavin Fineff