



14 December 2017

Senator Hon Mitch Fifield  
Minister for Communications  
PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Minister

Re: Proposed Gambling Provisions in the draft Commercial Television Industry Code of Practice

The City of Greater Dandenong is concerned at the content of the draft Commercial Television Industry Code of Practice for the free-to-air television industry.

Provisions permitting the broadcast of gambling advertisements after 8:30pm would enhance the proliferation of gambling promotion in our media.

It is the view of Council that such provisions would contribute to an expansion of sports betting, which has already seen an 800% rise in losses to this type of gambling in Victoria during the five years to 2015/16.

Further provisions of the draft Code, which facilitate the promotion of sports betting during major sporting broadcasts, hold the prospect of accentuating such losses.

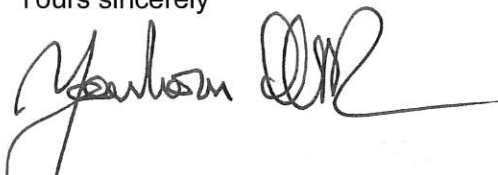
Of particular concern is that these features of the draft Code of Practice would increase the exposure of children and young adults to such promotions, thereby entrenching attitudes conducive to gambling among vulnerable and impressionable members of our community.

The practical experience of Council and other disadvantaged localities is that the highest levels of gambling losses are endured by individuals and communities with the least capacity to afford those losses. This tendency is documented thoroughly in Victorian and Australian research.

The adverse and widespread consequences of this trend include personal distress, work disruption, family violence and dissolution, and homelessness.

I therefore urge that consideration be given to measures to set stringent limits upon the growth of sports betting and other gambling advertising in the Commercial Television Industry Code of Practice, rather than lending further impetus to the proliferation of gambling advertising, as the current draft proposes.

Yours sincerely

  
Cr Youhorn Chea  
Mayor

cc Julian Hill MP – Member for Bruce  
Mark Dreyfus QC, MP – Member for Isaac  
Clare O'Neill MP – Member for Hotham