



November 13, 2025

The Right Honourable Mark Carney, P.C., M.P.  
Office of the Prime Minister  
Prime Minister of Canada  
80 Wellington Street  
Ottawa, ON  
K1A 0A2

## **Ban Sports Betting Ads**

Dear Prime Minister,

We are writing to request that your government use the legislative and regulatory tools at its disposal—including but not limited to its powers to give direction to the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC)—to impose a ban on all advertising for sports gambling apps and websites, similar to the existing ban on cigarette advertising.

You are no doubt aware that in the aftermath of the passage of Bill C-218, *An Act to amend the Criminal Code (sports betting)* in 2021, Canadians have been subjected to a deluge of advertising for sports betting “services”. In 2024, CBC published a report indicating that up to one-fifth of televised sporting events contain ads for gambling sites. To put it another way, almost two innings of a baseball game are gambling ads: it is reaching the point where the ads are competing with the actual event, rather than supporting it.

Such persistent publicity is more than a mere annoyance interfering with the simple enjoyment of sporting events. The sheer scale of the money at stake endangers the very integrity of the sports involved. To quote Fay Vincent, a former commissioner of Major League Baseball:

*I don't think the next 20 or 30 years is going to be a pretty story about gambling in the sports world because the money is going to be so enormous, and wherever the money is enormous the corruption follows.*

As if to demonstrate the seriousness of this growing problem, in 2024 the National Basketball Association issued what amounts to a lifetime ban to then Toronto Raptor basketball player Jontay Porter for, in the words of the league, “disclosing confidential information to sports bettors, limiting his own participation in one or more games for betting purposes, and betting on NBA games.”

But the more immediate problem, the one that, sadly, we don't have to wait thirty years to experience, is the very real harm being done today to vulnerable people of all ages exposed to a constant stream of advertisements promising a "premium gaming experience" and urging them to turn their phone into a pocket-sized casino. We are all too familiar with stories of individuals getting in over their heads and driven to desperate measures to cover their losses, causing damage not only for themselves but for their family as well. We constantly hear media reports of fraud cases caused by gambling addiction, leading to jail time.

In a recent report on the impact of gambling, the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health cited two risk factors for "gambling-related harm":

*Exposure to gambling.* In general, as gambling opportunities increase, gambling-related harms tend to increase; further the more an individual gambles, the more likely they are to experience harm.

*Form of gambling.* Forms of gambling vary greatly in terms of riskiness. Some combine features (e.g. rapid speed of play; losses disguised as wins) known to be problematic, making them especially likely to cause harm.

In other words, the very combination of app-based gambling and its relentless promotion that we have allowed to develop.

A decision by Parliament helped create this problem, which means further action might minimize the damage that is already being done. A key argument in favour of the legalization of single-event sport betting when it was before the Senate was that it would:

*... regulate sports betting in Canada, strengthen consumer protections to ensure the safety of those participating and bring revenues and tax dollars inside our borders to invest back into our communities.*

We now have the legislation. It is time to focus on regulations to ensure the safety of those participating. We cannot legislate away human weakness, but we can limit the ability of others to profit from that weakness, or indeed to promote the exploitation of that weakness.

Therefore, we are asking for a ban on all advertising for sports gambling apps and websites. Such a measure would be similar to the advertising ban for cigarettes, and for the same reason: to address a public health problem. This matches the conclusions of the report of the Lancet Public Health Commission on Gambling.

The UK based medical journal described gambling as an "expanding public health threat", affecting not just individuals and those around them but society as a whole. To meet this threat, the journal's report issued a range of recommendations, including:

*Reductions in population exposure and the availability of gambling, through prohibitions or restrictions on access, promotion, marketing, and sponsorship.*

This is precisely what is needed in Canada, and we urge your government to correct this situation and ban all sports betting ads.

Sincerely,

*(Original signed by)*

The Honourable Percy E. Downe, Senator

*(Original signed by)*

The Honourable Marty Deacon, Senator

**This letter is supported by the following senators:**

The Honourable Charles Adler, Senator  
The Honourable Mohammad Al Zaibak, Senator  
The Honourable David M. Arnot, Senator  
The Honourable Robert Black, Senator  
The Honourable Victor Boudreau, Senator  
The Honourable Patrick Brazeau, Senator  
The Honourable Bev Busson, Senator  
The Honourable Rodger Cuzner, Senator  
The Honourable Colin Deacon, Senator  
The Honourable Tony Dean, Senator  
The Honourable Baltej Dhillon, Senator  
The Honourable Éric Forest, Senator  
The Honourable Brian Francis, Senator  
The Honourable Rosa Galvez, Senator  
The Honourable Clément Gignac, Senator  
The Honourable Margo Greenwood, Senator  
The Honourable Katherine Hay, Senator  
The Honourable Danièle Henkel, Senator  
The Honourable Tony Ince, Senator  
The Honourable Joan Kingston, Senator

The Honourable Stanley Kutcher, Senator  
The Honourable Todd Lewis, Senator  
The Honourable Tony Loffreda, Senator  
The Honourable Elizabeth Marshall, Senator  
The Honourable Marnie McBean, Senator  
The Honourable John McNair, Senator  
The Honourable Marilou McPhedran, Senator  
The Honourable Julie Miville-Dechêne, Senator  
The Honourable Lucie Moncion, Senator  
The Honourable Kim Pate, Senator  
The Honourable Rebecca Patterson, Senator  
The Honourable Chantal Petitclerc, Senator  
The Honourable PJ Prosper, Senator  
The Honourable Jim Quinn, Senator  
The Honourable Mohamed-Iqbal Ravalia, Senator  
The Honourable Krista Ross, Senator  
The Honourable Paulette Senior, Senator  
The Honourable Scott Tannas, Senator  
The Honourable Kristopher Wells, Senator  
The Honourable Judy White, Senator