

24 July 2026

Environment and Communications Legislation Committee
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Submitted via: [Interactive Gambling Amendment \(Gambling Reform\) Bill 2026 and National Self-exclusion Register \(Cost Recovery Levy\) Amendment Bill 2026 – Parliament of Australia](#)

Dear Committee Members,

Interactive Gambling Amendment (Gambling Reform) Bill 2026 and National Self-exclusion Register (Cost Recovery Levy) Amendment Bill 2026

The Australian Psychological Society (APS) welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission to the inquiry on the *Interactive Gambling Amendment (Gambling Reform) Bill 2026* (the Bill).

The APS is the leading professional association for psychologists in Australia. We play a critical role in addressing gambling-related harm by supporting psychologists to prevent, identify and treat its impacts. APS members work across clinical, community, and policy settings to deliver early intervention, therapeutic support and advocacy for harm minimisation strategies. In parallel, the APS actively engages in policy development to inform regulation, public education and responsible gambling initiatives, ensuring that responses to gambling harm are grounded in scientific evidence and prioritise the wellbeing of individuals, families and communities.

The APS has been a long-term advocate for reducing gambling-related harm¹. We recognise the tensions that exist in regulating gambling as it represents both a source of income for governments and the private sector, while also being a public health concern causing significant harm to many individuals and communities in Australia. In addition, and in contradiction to the above, gambling harm leads to further social impacts and economic costs to governments, not least of which is based on the provision of support services.

While the APS supports the Bill's intention to improve protections against gambling harm, we call for these protections to be strengthened, particularly to prevent gambling harm against vulnerable groups including children and young people.

The APS supports the submission provided by the Alliance for Gambling Reform² and Wesley Mission³ and the full implementation of the *You win some, you lose more Inquiry* (Murphy Report) recommendations⁴. We propose key changes that the Australian Government could make to strengthen protections from gambling harm.

Restrictions on gambling advertising

By legislating this Bill, the Australian Government proposes to reduce the prevalence of gambling advertising by:

- Restricting gambling advertising on broadcast television to no more than three ads each hour between 6.00am and 8:30pm, with a complete ban during live sport broadcasts within those hours
- Banning gambling ads on the radio during school drop-off (8.00am to 9.00am) and pick-up (3.00pm to 4.00pm)
- Banning gambling advertising on online platforms, unless a user is logged on, is over 18, and has the option to opt-out of gambling advertising.

While these proposed changes go some way towards reducing gambling advertising, the APS is concerned that vulnerable groups, particularly children and young people⁵, will continue to be subjected to gambling advertising outside these periods across multiple platforms. The Bill also relies on an opt-out model for online gambling, with evidence indicating that very few people change default settings and will continue to be exposed to gambling advertising.

The APS recommends, consistent with Recommendation 26 of the Murphy Report⁴, that instead, the Australian Government, in collaboration with the state and territory governments, implements a comprehensive ban on advertising for online gambling, to be phased in over three years. Further, while a transition is made to a comprehensive ban, we recommend that an opt-in model for online gambling is adopted, where only people who actively choose to receive gambling ads access them.

Ban gambling inducements

The Bill does not directly address the prohibition of gambling inducements. The Murphy Report found that online gambling products allow operators to directly target individual customers with promotions and inducements, which, in addition to other features of online gambling products can exacerbate the risk of gambling harm⁴. The APS recommends, consistent with Murphy Report Recommendation 16, that the Australian Government prohibit all online gambling inducements and inducement advertising⁴.

Establish a national online gambling regulator

The APS has outlined in a previous submission⁶ that members who work with people experiencing harm from gambling have expressed concern that there appears to be 'workarounds' for many regulations whereby some restrictions are only minor or moderately effective. We therefore support Recommendation 3 of the Murphy Report⁴, which calls for the Australian Government to establish national regulation and a national online gambling regulator with responsibility for all licencing and regulation for the sole purpose of reducing gambling harm and its related social and economic impacts.

We also support Murphy Report Recommendation 23⁴, that the national regulator be provided with a broad suite of powers to monitor online gambling, ensure compliance and enforce the legislation. Further, we agree that penalties should be severe enough to be a genuine deterrent to multinational corporations breaching their legal obligations⁴.

Additional comments

The APS commends the Australian Government for committing to an investment in the development and implementation of a targeted public awareness and education campaign to increase awareness of gambling harms⁷. We anticipate that this will contribute to exposing the sophisticated strategies used by the gambling industry and help to counteract the strong influence that gambling advertising has on vulnerable groups within Australian society. The APS is particularly concerned about protecting children and young people from exposure to online gambling⁵ and recommends consideration be given to introducing gambling harm minimisation education in schools.

Finally, we recommend that the Australian Government, in collaboration with state and territory governments, ensure that there is adequate funding for psychologists, as an appropriately trained and skilled workforce, to support people who experience gambling harm.

Should any further information be required from the APS, please do not hesitate to contact me on [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely

Dr Zena Burgess FAPS FAICD

Chief Executive Officer

References

1. Australian Psychological Society. (2012). *Gambling-related harm: An APS position statement*. <https://psychology.org.au/about-us/position-statements/gambling-related-harm>
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6. Australian Psychological Society. (2022). *APS response to Inquiry into online gambling and its impact on those experiencing gambling harm*. <https://psychology.org.au/psychology/advocacy/submissions/professional-practice/2022/inquiry-into-online-gambling-and-its-impact-on-tho>
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