

Submitted to: House of Commons Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights

Dear Committee Members:

**RE: Bill C-218 - An Act to amend the Criminal Code (sports betting)**

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Alberta Gaming, Liquor & Cannabis (AGLC) has been closely monitoring and is supportive of the swift passage of Bill C-218, An Act to Amend the Criminal Code (sports betting) that would legalize single event sports wagering in Canada.

Passage of Bill C-218 would present expanded gambling opportunities for Albertans 18 years and older, and it would present new options for players on Alberta's only regulated gambling website PlayAlberta.ca. Revenue generated on this site stays in the province, supporting programs and services that make Alberta an even better place to live and work.

### **Modernized gambling laws make sense**

AGLC has supported modernized gambling laws for a number of years, including allowing for single event sports wagering. The original intent of Section 207, which was designed to prevent sporting events in Canada from being "fixed" or manipulated to create specific outcomes that would benefit individuals (or groups) who wagered on these outcomes, is no longer valid. Increasingly, gaming, including sports wagering, occurs at a global level, and it is unlikely the Canadian government's prohibition on sports wagering can affect potential interference in the outcomes of sporting events.

In addition to integrating sports wagering into PlayAlberta.ca in 2021, adjusting the Criminal Code to allow for betting on a single event would give AGLC the ability to work with its industry stakeholders to offer sports wagering in destination facilities throughout Alberta.

### **Support for regulated gambling**

According to research undertaken by AGLC, Deloitte estimates that roughly \$1.8 billion annually is wagered by Albertans on unregulated offshore sports gambling websites. Those websites provide limited protections or means of responsible play, education or access to responsible gambling tools.

Alberta's only regulated gambling website PlayAlberta.ca uses AGLC's best-in-class GameSense responsible gambling program, which promotes healthy gambling behaviours and gives players access to valuable tools and resources.

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Unregulated sports gambling offers little to no responsible gambling features, leaving the player with limited protections or means of responsible play, education or access to other responsible gambling tools.

Current restrictions do not allow the provinces to compete on an even playing field, thus allowing substantial revenues to flow to unregulated, illegal organizations and off-shore internet sites, without providing any financial benefits to Canadians.

Removing these barriers to allow for provincially regulated alternatives would not only provide the provinces with financial benefits for their communities and social programs, but it would also provide gaming consumers with the security and integrity that is inherent in provincially regulated gaming.

Thank you for your consideration of this important piece of legislation. We appreciate the opportunity to share our views on this matter.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "K Machado". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

Kandice Machado  
Acting President & Chief Executive Officer

copy: Len Rhodes, Board Chair, AGLC