

March 11, 2021

Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights
Sixth Floor, 131 Queen Street
House of commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Dear Committee Members,

I am writing today to pledge the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation's (OLG) support for Bill C-218, An Act to Amend the *Criminal Code of Canada* (sports betting) to legalize single event sports wagering in Canada.

In Ontario, OLG is the only gaming operator that provides Ontarians with safe and secure parlay style wagering through lottery retailers located at 10,000 points of sale located in a range of settings including convenience, gas, big box and casinos.

OLG is now poised to launch wagering on sporting events through the only gambling website currently authorized to do business in Ontario, OLG.ca. In the last year, OLG's popular online offering has grown by more than 200% and we will build on this success by expanding our offering to include innovative sports products including – if permitted – single event sports wagering.

Regulated in Ontario, OLG.ca offers entertainment in a safe and secure environment that guarantees financial accountability, game integrity, and other protections such as personal privacy, consumer protection and anti-money laundering reporting as required by federal law.

Unlike grey market operators, all of OLG's proceeds are reinvested back into the Province for the benefit of all Ontarians. This includes support for provincial priorities such as the operation of hospitals and education, problem gambling prevention and treatment, amateur sport and charities. Single event sports wagering is one of the fastest growing categories of gambling entertainment, and it includes a significant shift in consumer preferences towards online sports betting products. Unfortunately, unregulated black and grey market gaming sites are currently the entities largely profiting from this type of gambling popular with customers worldwide including Canadians.

4120 Yonge St., Suite 402, Toronto, ON M2P 2B8 | 4120, rue Yonge, bureau 402, Toronto, ON M2P 2B8
W olg.ca | T (416) 224-1772 | F (416) 224-7000

In 2019-20, Ontario's provincial iGaming market, including OLG, was estimated to be \$700 million in gross gaming revenue, and for the most part, consumers are unaware of the difference between a regulated offering (i.e. OLG.ca) and an illegal and unregulated offering. As you have heard in the Committee presentations, these unregulated online sports betting platforms typically provide minimal consumer protections to support responsible gambling play and present a heightened public safety risk to Canadians.

In Ontario, OLG provides players with educational tools and materials, as well as protections to support responsible play and healthy gambling behaviours, for example deposit limits, break nudges, and voluntary self-exclusion. OLG's Responsible Gambling (RG) program "PlaySmart" is designed to mitigate problem gambling risks, while contributing to sustainable revenues and strengthening OLG's reputation. The World Lottery Association has awarded OLG "Best Overall Responsible Gambling Program" in the world in 2014 and 2018.

We would also note that legalized single event sports wagering will benefit local merchants across Ontario, who rely on lottery sales to drive traffic and augment revenues. Additionally, our land-based gaming partners, who are investing billions in capital and supporting thousands of jobs across our province, will benefit from being able to offer retail sportsbooks in their casinos.

OLG is committed to working with the Government of Canada as well as our provincial counterparts to promote a safe and regulated online gaming choice for players. Bill C-218 will put Canada on an even playing field with unregulated illegal operators, while also providing player security and protections and generating additional revenue that will support Canadians and local communities.

I would like to thank you for your consideration of this proposed amendment to the Criminal Code, and for the opportunity to share OLG's position on this important proposal.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Duncan Hannay', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Duncan Hannay
President and Chief Executive Officer

c.c. Peter M. Deeb, Chair, OLG Board of Directors