

TOM PURSGLOVE MP
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

29th May 2018

Jew Constant

RE: GAMING MACHINE REFORMS.

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of the reforms to Fixed Odds Betting Terminals.

I appreciate your concerns about the impact of the changes: fixed odds betting terminals are important to the economic viability of many betting shops, but Ministers argue that we cannot ignore the evidence that has been presented on the potential impact these types of gaming machines can have on individuals and wider communities. The belief is that reducing the maximum stakes on FOBTs from £100 to £2 will help stop extreme losses by those who can least afford it.

There has been a shift in attitudes within the industry, with more focus on social responsibility; something I have been supporting through doing my visits to the betting shops in our area to meet with the committed staff, and to understand more about the measures they have put in place. However, the Government believes that self-regulation has not had a significant impact in tackling problem gambling, with a large number of higher-staking machines in accessible locations, often in more deprived areas, where it is possible to lose a large amount of money very quickly.

Following the analysis of all the evidence received during the review, the Government concluded that a £2 stake limit would most substantially impact on harm. Ministers are committed to working with the industry on the impact of these changes and are confident that this innovative sector will step up, be able to adapt, and help achieve the right balance between enabling people to bet responsibly and ensuring consumers and communities are protected.

Of course, there are understandably other factors which contribute to problem gambling, which is why the Government is not making this change in isolation. Other actions include increasing player protections around online gambling and enhancing protections around gambling advertising. They hope these measures will help maintain a healthy gambling industry that contributes to the economy, but one that also does all it can to protect players.

Once again, thank you for having taken the time to contact me and if I can ever be of any further assistance to you then please do not hesitate to contact me again.



with best wishes,

Tom

**TOM PURSGLOVE MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**