

**TOM PURSGLOVE MP**  
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE



**HOUSE OF COMMONS**

LONDON SW1A 0AA

16<sup>th</sup> December 2020

*New Content,*

**RE: CORONAVIRUS – CASINOS**

Thank you for your recent correspondence about casinos during the Coronavirus pandemic; your comments upon which I have read with great interest.

I appreciate your concerns about the impact of Coronavirus on casinos. Like many other industries up and down the country, casinos have been particularly hard hit by the restrictions imposed and I shall continue to do all I can to help ensure they remain viable over the months ahead.

I do, however, welcome the Government's engagement with the gambling industry in recent months. I understand that officials from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport have been in regular contact with the Betting & Gaming Council, as well as individual casino operators, to discuss the impact of restrictions on their businesses. Discussions are ongoing and have included consideration of potential measures to reduce risk, such as the withdrawal of alcohol sales. However, I am unaware of any proposals being brought forward specifically for the gambling industry at this point.

While I understand that this must be frustrating for you, I am pleased with the actions the Government has taken to support businesses and employees during this period. In light of the introduction of national restrictions in November, the Chancellor announced that workers across the UK would benefit from increased support with a five-month extension of the 'furlough' scheme into Spring 2021. Furthermore, he said that Government backed loans and the Future Fund would be extended until the end of January, as well as an ability to top-up Bounce Back Loans.

Clearly, this is a situation that nobody wishes to be in, and I dislike it as much as anybody else, but if we all continue to do our bit for each other, we will come through this and the massive vaccine breakthroughs of recent days are undoubtedly a source of comfort and encouragement and the tiering approach is without question preferable to the 'lockdown'. The inescapable truth is that all of the emergency response is a very difficult balancing act, with freedoms maintained in one area requiring difficult decisions to be taken in others, and that inevitably leads to disruption and the curtailment of freedoms in some parts of day-to-day life. Personally, I struggle to see the alternative in the interim, given the risks I have knowledge of, but there is now meaningful light at the end of the tunnel, which I hope we can all rally around and welcome, regardless of our personal views on what has gone before.

**LISTENING TO YOU - CAMPAIGNING FOR YOU**

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For the time being though, it is essential that we look towards that light at the end of the tunnel and look forward to when we can finally throw off the shackles of the restrictions once and for all. That will undoubtedly be a very good day - something about which we can all agree.

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**