



May 18, 2007

President George W. Bush
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

Greetings from Focus on the Family and the millions of concerned families we represent. We commend you for signing the immensely important Unlawful Internet Gambling Enforcement Act of 2006 (Public Law 109-347). We are concerned, however, that the Treasury Department's forthcoming regulations will be inadequate to enforce this legislation, thus rendering the law ineffective.

This law—if regulated and enforced properly—cuts off payment to unlawful Internet-gambling businesses, specifically off-shore operations beyond the reach of direct law enforcement. Financial institutions and payment systems are effectively required by this law to stop payment for illegal online-gambling operations.

Without effective regulations, children will be exposed to online gambling and our national security placed in jeopardy. More than 230 million people in the United States access the Internet, including children. Computers don't ask your age, nor can they assess whether laundered money is funding criminal and terrorist groups.

Secretary Henry Paulson and Chairman Ben Bernanke are responsible for overseeing the drafting of the regulations. But we also understand that foreign online-gambling lobbyists (like the Poker Players Alliance) are actively pushing for weak regulations that lack the teeth to enforce this law. The online-gambling industry would have the U.S. Congress believe that enforcing such legislation is impossible, but nothing could be further from the truth.

Unlawful Internet gambling can be stopped in the U.S. if the regulations are strong enough. Listed below are important regulatory requirements that would uphold the Unlawful Internet Gambling Enforcement Act of 2006:

- Assign several federal law-enforcement professionals (approximately five agents) to obtain and maintain a list of Internet gambling businesses whose financial transactions should be blocked. (Several federal agencies -- FinCEN and OFAC -- already monitor and block financial transactions related to known terrorists and criminals. A list of unlawful Internet-gambling operations could be added easily.)
- Regulate a portal or mechanism for citizens to report illegal online-gambling sites to the DOJ (a minor addition to the existing DOJ Web site along with a specific phone line).
- Uphold regulations that enable federal law enforcement to effectively prosecute unlawful Internet-gambling operations and hold the banking industry in compliance with Public Law 109-347.

On behalf of the millions of concerned families represented by Focus on the Family, we urge you to ensure that the Treasury Department's regulations are sufficient to uphold and enforce the Unlawful Internet Gambling Enforcement Act of 2006. Your attention to this matter is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Minnery".

Tom Minnery
Senior Vice President, Government & Public Policy