

Media Release  
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## **Free TV warns that an extreme approach to advertising restrictions will harm Australian viewers**

Free TV today called for a measured response to the recommendations of the House Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs in their inquiry into online gambling, and warned that gambling advertising bans will undermine the sustainability of commercial television services.

Responding to the Committee's recommendations, Bridget Fair, Free TV CEO, said "The Committee's proposed ban is based on a fundamentally flawed premise that the advertising market is some kind of magic pudding. But reductions in advertising revenue in the current economic and competitive environment can only result in less funding for Australian content.

"While we appreciate that there are concerns in the community regarding the volume of gambling ads, kneejerk moves to implement outright bans will ultimately hurt viewers and the television services they love.

"These services are available to every Australian no matter where they live or how much they earn and they are only possible because of advertising revenue.

"Commercial television spends more than \$1.5 billion on Australian content every year, providing Australian audiences with more than 25,000 hours of free local trusted news, Australian drama and entertainment, vital coverage of national emergencies and live and free sport year in, year out.

"Many of the sports broadcasting deals have been agreed to beyond the three year phase out period for advertising.

"The Government has quite rightly said that it will take its time to consider the committee's report before responding. Now is the time for a considered response to this important issue.

"Our industry is ready to work constructively with the Government on measures that would reduce the amount of gambling advertising on television and other platforms, while ensuring that the industry can continue to deliver high quality content to all Australians.

"Measures like frequency caps would be a better and more targeted approach to respond to any community concern around the volume of advertising.

"This would build on the current restrictions on gambling advertising, including the existing ban on gambling advertising in live sport before 8.30pm and strict limits in sport after that time.

"Any further restrictions on gambling advertising must be offset by reductions in the regulatory burdens on commercial broadcasters. In particular, removing spectrum fees which are completely out-of-step with other countries that have already abolished such fees decades ago," Ms Fair said.

**ENDS**



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**ABOUT FREE TV AUSTRALIA**

Free TV Australia is a leading media industry organisation. It represents all of Australia's commercial free-to-air television licensees through advocacy, innovation and strategic advice. The members of Free TV Australia are Seven West Media, Nine Entertainment Co, Network 10, Southern Cross Austereo, WIN Network and Imparja Television.