**William Hill Campaign**

Dear Sir/Madam

I am responding to the consultation on **proposals for changes to maximum stake and prize limits for category B, C and D gaming machines.**

I work for William Hill, the UK’s largest retail bookmaker and as one of William Hill’s 13 000 employees based in the UK, I know the importance of ensuring that our customers enjoy what is a fun leisure activity in a safe and well regulated environment. My position within William Hill is an Area Operations Manager and I have over 40 years service with the Company.

The UK betting industry employs around 40 000 people across the UK, supports the jobs of 60 000 more and contributes around £1 billion each year to the exchequer.  The number of betting shops in the UK has remained relatively stable over the last decade at around 8900 shops. **In fact the betting industry has seen a vast decline in the number of betting shops since the 1960s when there were close to 16 000 betting shops in the UK.**

For the overwhelming majority of our customers in the UK, gambling is an enjoyable leisure activity. Over 99% of British adults who gamble do so without getting into difficulties. Some unfortunately do have problems and the industry takes its responsibilities in this regard seriously. We operate self-exclusion procedures and a strict “Think 21” policy; as well as interacting with customers who do exhibit signs of being out of control and signposting them to Gamcare.

Our customers bet on a variety of products including horse racing, greyhounds, number s and virtual products and also play games on our machines. Electronic gaming machines have been in shops for over a decade and have become a very popular product. The gaming machines have brought us new customers and given existing customers a new product to enjoy.

In my view, there is no significant reason why gaming machines in betting shops should be singled out (amongst all other products) for increased regulatory control; certainly stakes and prizes should not be reduced.

In my opinion the picture painted about betting operators by the likes of the “Campaign for Fairer Gambling”, which is not a recognised gambling charity, is inaccurate and misleading. Certain TV programmes that I have seen have also given misleading and inaccurate information, which I can only think has been gleaned from ill-informed sources.

With this in mind, my major concern is that this could lead to unnecessary changes to stakes and prizes and will result in significant job losses within our industry.

Thank you for taking the time to read this.

Yours sincerely,