



Department for
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Rt Hon George Howarth MP
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Dear George

Thank you for your email of 18 October to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Rt Hon Philip Hammond MP, on behalf of your constituents regarding the reduction of the maximum stake for Fixed Odds Betting Terminals. Your correspondence has been passed to the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport as this issue falls within the department's remit. I am replying as the minister responsible for this policy area.

In May 2018, the government announced that it planned to introduce legislation to reduce the maximum stake for Fixed Odds Betting Terminals from £100 to £2. The Chancellor of the Exchequer confirmed in the Budget that the introduction of the new stake limits are tied to an increase in Remote Gaming Duty from 15% to 21%, set to come into effect in October 2019. However, the government was aware of concerns expressed about continuing harm to problem gamblers and has listened to Parliament. Therefore, the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport announced on 14 November that the government will bring forward the implementation date for the new stake limit and the Remote Gaming Duty increase to April 2019. To this effect, the necessary affirmative regulations were laid before Parliament on 15 November.

The government remains committed to taking action to protect the most vulnerable in society from the harm that these gaming machines can cause and this has also to be a priority for the gambling industry. Industry now has clarity on timings for implementation, and we expect them to mitigate employment impacts and provide the right support to those affected by any job losses.

We have always stated that gambling-related harm must be thought of as more than one product, which is why in May we also announced a package of measures that will strengthen protections around gaming machines as a whole, online gambling, advertising and treatment for problem gamblers. The government expects the gambling industry to continue to engage wholeheartedly with these measures.

With best wishes,

Mims Davies MP
Minister for Sport and Civil Society

