To whom it may concern,

I am a gambler. I am not your typical ‘problem’ gambler. But I do have a problem.

My problem is that I have made a profit and the Australian licenced bookmakers have closed my accounts, limited my bets or reduced my odds. No other industry is allowed to discriminate against customers the way bookmakers are. It is scandalous.

So I use offshore bookmakers who will accept my bets. And this enquiry has me concerned. Not only do I stand to lose the opportunity to continue to gamble profitably, but, more importantly, it’s very nature clearly misses the point and does nothing for the problem gambler. The true problem in the gambling industry is the predatory practices of the locally licenced bookmakers.

In recent times, there has been a massive growth in gambling advertising. Bookmakers are regularly offering major incentives and promotions to entice people to bet. Clearly they are spending big. But if you take them up on these offers and win consistently, then accounts are quickly crippled. They only want problem gamblers as customers. Not educated ones.

* Ladbrokes closed down my accounts with them and their affiliates overnight, refusing to pay $200 that was owing via the promotional conditions under which the bets were placed.
* Unibet limits my bets to amounts as low as 51c.
* Sportsbet and Luxbet limit my bets to a small fraction of the amount they would accept when I first joined. They were more than happy to accept large bets when they thought I was just another mug punter.
* William Hill and affiliates reduce their odds as soon as I log in to my account. I can view the publicly listed odds without logging in, but I can’t place bets at those odds.

Anyone who has a demonstrated history of winning will have similar stories.

Any enquiry into gambling in this country should include a review of the blog by Steve at [www.daily25.com](http://www.daily25.com). It looks at the highs and lows of his gambling journey and the dirty tricks the bookmakers use. In particular, <http://www.daily25.com/an-open-letter-to-scott-morrison-and-barry-ofarrell/> is addressed specifically to this enquiry.

There are offshore bookmakers that don’t operate these predatory practices. They consistently offer better odds and don’t limit winning accounts. They don’t offer enticements to lure problem gamblers.

They give educated Australian gamblers a fair go that the locally licenced operators won’t.

It is scandalous that the Australian gambling industry is allowed to discriminate and only accept bets from potential problem gamblers. They would quickly stop offering these promotions if they were forced to accept bets under the same conditions for all customers, rather than only offering them to losing gamblers.

Until the predatory practices of the local industry are addressed, regulators have no moral grounds for targeting offshore operators. To do so is nothing but a political exercise designed to create the impression of doing something to help problem gamblers, while being wilfully blind to the real problems faced by problem gamblers.