

**Testimony of William C. Miller, Jr.
President & CEO
American Gaming Association
Remarks, As Prepared for Delivery
Before the Senate Judiciary Committee
“Protecting the Integrity of College Athletics”**

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Chairman Graham, Ranking Member Blumenthal, and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

As the president and CEO of the American Gaming Association, I am honored to represent the U.S. casino gaming industry at today's hearing.

Legal sports betting in America has greatly expanded since the Supreme Court declared the Professional and Amateur Sports Protection Act, or PASPA, unconstitutional in May 2018. This important ruling enabled states and sovereign tribal nations to decide whether to legalize and regulate sports betting within their jurisdictions.

Since the prohibition was overturned, 22 states and the District of Columbia have authorized sports betting. In fact, only three states have not made moves to legalize sports betting.

Since that ruling, the American gaming industry has remained focused on getting sports betting right. Working with state and tribal leaders, we continue to prioritize consumer protection, robust oversight, and unlocking vital economic resources.

Americans have been betting on sports as long as there have been sports to bet on. Under PASPA, an estimated \$150 billion a year was bet illegally. Clearly, the federal prohibition did not eliminate sports betting, it only managed to drive it underground.

Illegal gambling operations fuel other criminal activities, and lack protections for consumers, athletes, competitions, and the bets placed on them. Thankfully, legal options, operating under state and tribal regulatory oversight, are enhancing transparency, consumer protections, and game integrity.

More Americans now have access to legal sports betting than ever before, yet the illegal market continues to thrive, driven in part by continued restrictions and widespread confusion about the legality of easy-to-access offshore sites.

Recent AGA research found that while an overwhelming majority of sports bettors think it's important to only bet through legal providers, most sports bettors still participate, often unknowingly, in the illegal market.

It is critical to address this through continued legalization, consumer education, and a sustained, coordinated crackdown on illegal sportsbooks operating in the U.S.

At the same time, the responsibility for integrity in legal sports betting must be a shared imperative. Just as we share in the economic opportunity, all stakeholders also share in the reputational risks associated with scandals.

Nobody has a greater vested interest in avoiding scandal than legal gaming operators. In fact, licensed sports books in Nevada have historically been the first to uncover match fixing, identifying irregular betting patterns and alerting regulators.

Still, concerns remain about whether college athletes are more susceptible to corruption. We share this concern and believe it to be the most compelling reason to bring this activity out of the shadows, and under the protection of the 4,000 dedicated gaming regulators across the country.

Billions of dollars are wagered annually on events like March Madness and the College Football Playoff, and this activity didn't begin with the invalidation of PASPA. Any effort to ban legal wagering on college athletics simply ignores the immutable fact that there remains significant demand for betting on college sports.

In the absence of legal alternatives, predatory illegal operators will unequivocally meet this demand. Therefore, the real public policy question is not if sports betting will occur, but whether it should take place through legal or illegal channels.

The AGA strongly opposes any additional federal regulatory framework that supersedes state and tribal sports betting policy. Instead, the primary role of the federal government should remain enforcement against the illegal marketplace, which represents the most meaningful solution to help ensure the integrity of sports.

We also urge the Congress to repeal the federal excise tax on sports wagers, which advances no specific policy goal and puts legal operators at a competitive disadvantage.

Increased focus on these efforts will protect consumers, athletes, the integrity of competition and bets placed on them, while leveling the playing field for operators who play by the rules.

Protecting the integrity of competition is central to the interests of the entire sports betting ecosystem. The federal prohibition on sports betting was a failed endeavor that shouldn't be replicated. Instead, we should work together to further eliminate the pervasive illegal market and support experienced regulators whose oversight protects the interests and integrity of all involved.

The AGA is unwavering in our commitment to work with all stakeholders to establish legal sports betting markets that safeguard vulnerable athletes, the integrity of competitions, and American sports bettors.

Thank you.