



Press Release
Contact: Erin Utzinger
(202) 872-0010 or (202) 872-4860
info@safeandsecureig.org

European Union Demand for Compensation from U.S. in WTO Escalates Need for Regulated Internet Gambling

Internet gambling showdown increases pressure on lawmakers to regulate Internet gambling as more countries demand compensation for current U.S. free trade agreement violations

June 22, 2007 – Statement by Jeffrey Sandman, spokesperson for the Safe and Secure Internet Gambling Initiative, on how the European Union’s request for compensation from the U.S. for banning foreign based Internet gambling operators from accessing the U.S. market, a WTO trade agreement violation, will build support for regulated Internet gambling to bring the U.S. into WTO compliance.

In March, the WTO confirmed once again that the U.S. unfairly prohibits foreign Internet gambling operators from providing services to U.S. citizens while allowing domestic companies to legally accept bets on horse racing. The E.U. joins Antigua and Barbuda in seeking compensation to equal the benefits that have been lost.

“Today’s announcement provides further evidence that the U.S. must address the hypocrisy in the way it treats Internet gambling. As proposed under the Internet Gambling Regulation and Enforcement Act, legislation recently introduced by Congressman Barney Frank, we should be able to place online bets on sports, casino games, poker and pinochle, just as it is legal to place bets on horse racing. Moreover, the government should not be telling us what we can and can’t do with our leisure time.

The U.S. has two options. It either faces paying billions in trade compensation to other countries for not complying with WTO trade agreements and affecting U.S. industries which have no involvement with gambling in the process, or, alternatively, the U.S. could regulate Internet gambling, allowing for a level playing field among domestic and foreign Internet gambling operators.

We support the European Union’s effort and hope it will serve as a wake-up call for lawmakers that regulated Internet gambling is needed to bring the U.S. into compliance with the WTO, avoid affecting unrelated industries, better protect consumers and generate billions of dollars for important government programs.”

Under the Internet Gambling Regulation and Enforcement Act, recently introduced by Congressman Barney Frank (D-MA) to regulate Internet gambling, any online gambling operator wanting to do business in the U.S. – domestic and non-U.S. based – would be required to obtain a license and put in place safeguards to protect against underage and compulsive gambling and ensure the integrity of financial transactions. Without regulation, there is no way to protect against such abuses.

About Safe and Secure Internet Gambling Initiative

The Safe and Secure Internet Gambling Initiative promotes the freedom of individuals to gamble online with the proper safeguards to protect consumers and ensure the integrity of financial

transactions. For more information on the Initiative, please visit www.safeandsecureig.org. The Web site provides a means by which individuals can register support for regulated Internet gambling with their elected representatives.