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Attorney General Griffin Joins Bipartisan Effort Urging U.S. Department of Justice to Address Illegal Offshore Gaming

Griffin: 'Illegal offshore gaming operations disregard the law, exploit vulnerable individuals, and allow underage gambling without proper safeguards'

LITTLE ROCK – Attorney General Tim Griffin issued the following statement after he joined a letter from a bipartisan coalition of 50 attorneys general to U.S. Attorney General Pam Bondi urging the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) to assist in addressing the rampant spread of illegal offshore gaming across the country. The attorneys general stressed the need for action to protect the rule of law, combat consumer harm, and curb the unprecedented growth of the illicit online gambling market:

“Illegal offshore gaming operations disregard the law, exploit vulnerable individuals, and allow underage gambling without proper safeguards. Some of these illegal entities impersonate Arkansas casinos online and on social media, misleading users with familiar visuals while including fictitious links. Once the link is selected, the user is redirected to the illegal offshore gaming platform.”

Illegal online sports betting and gaming operations are largely operated by foreign-based companies that routinely operate without proper licensure, offer intentionally insufficient consumer protections, fail to effectively verify the age of users, ignore state boundaries, and evade tax obligations.

In the letter, Griffin and the coalition highlight the significant harm caused to states and residents by these unlawful platforms—particularly to young people, vulnerable adults, and state and local economies. Specifically, illegal gaming operations expose users to fraudulent schemes and encourage gambling addictions without any oversight or accountability; undercut state-regulated markets; and have been linked to money laundering, human trafficking, and other illegal conduct.

Illegal online gaming is estimated to exceed more than \$400 billion in volume annually, leading to more than \$4 billion in lost tax revenue for states.

The DOJ must assist and coordinate with states in deploying robust legal tools and enforcement actions against illegal offshore gaming operations, especially because of the DOJ's extremely limited action since 2013.

Particularly, the coalition urges the DOJ to help curb illegal offshore gaming operations by:

- Pursuing injunctive relief under the Unlawful Internet Gambling Enforcement Act to block access to illegal websites and payment processing mechanisms related to illicit gaming operations;
- Seizing assets—including servers, websites, domains, and proceeds—used by gaming operators that violate state and federal law; and
- Coordinating with states, financial institutions, and payment processors to block unlawful transactions and dismantle financial infrastructure related to illegal gaming operations.

To read the letter to the DOJ, [click here](#).

The letter was co-led by the attorneys general of Connecticut, Massachusetts, Nebraska, and Utah. Joining Griffin in submitting today's letter are the attorneys general of Alabama, Alaska, American Samoa, Arizona, California, Colorado, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Northern Mariana Islands, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia, U.S. Virgin Islands, Washington, West Virginia, and Wyoming.

About Attorney General Tim Griffin

Tim Griffin was sworn in as the 57th Attorney General of Arkansas on January 10, 2023, having previously served as the state's 20th Lieutenant Governor from 2015-2023. From 2011-2015, Griffin served as the 24th representative of Arkansas's Second Congressional District, where he served on the House Committee on Ways and Means, House Armed Services Committee, House Committee on Foreign Affairs, House Committee on Ethics and House Committee on the Judiciary while also serving as a Deputy Whip for the Majority.

Griffin is currently an officer in the Arkansas Army National Guard and holds the rank of colonel. Griffin served as an officer in the U.S. Army Reserve Judge Advocate General's (JAG) Corps for more than 28 years. In 2005, Griffin was mobilized to active duty as an Army prosecutor at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, and served with the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) in Mosul, Iraq.

His previous assignments include serving as the Commander of the 2d Legal Operations Detachment in New Orleans, Louisiana; the Commander of the 134th Legal Operations Detachment at Fort Bragg, North Carolina; and as a Senior Legislative Advisor to the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness at the Pentagon. Griffin earned a master's degree in strategic studies as a Distinguished Honor Graduate from the U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

Griffin also served as U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Arkansas, and Special Assistant to the President and Deputy Director of Political Affairs for President George W. Bush; Special Assistant to Assistant Attorney General Michael Chertoff, Criminal Division, U.S. Department of Justice; Special Assistant U.S. Attorney, U.S. Attorney's Office, Eastern District of Arkansas; Senior Investigative Counsel, Government Reform and Oversight Committee, U.S. House of Representatives; and Associate Independent Counsel, Office of Independent Counsel David M. Barrett, In re: HUD Secretary Henry Cisneros.

Griffin is a graduate of Magnolia High School, Hendrix College in Conway, and Tulane Law School in New Orleans. He attended graduate school at Oxford University. He is admitted to practice law in Arkansas (active) and Louisiana (inactive). Griffin lives in Little Rock with his wife, Elizabeth, a Camden native, and their three children.

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