

21 November 2016

The Secretary
Joint Select Committee on Future Gaming Markets
Legislative Council
Parliament House
HOBART 7000
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22 NOV 2016

Submission: Future Gaming Markets

I am particularly concerned regarding the proliferation of what are generally referred to as *Poker Machines*:

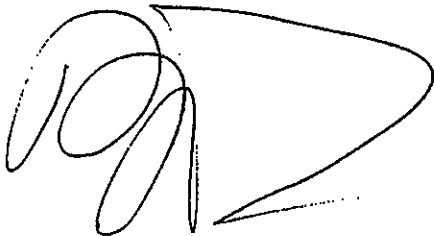
1. There has been little official scrutiny or transparency regarding their deployment. Contrast this with the intense debate during the lead up to the 1968 referendum regarding the introduction of casinos. However, even then there was public concern when Federal Hotels were granted the first casino licence in Australia with the proposal going to tender!
2. Poker machines are designed to attract and ensnare the more vulnerable members of society, being located in the areas where the people who can least afford to lose money live. Glenorchy is an example of this. Local business are missing out because the consumers' dollars are being guzzled by the pokies.
3. As a result of these machines families are going without adequate food, clothing and (in some cases) housing. Businesses and voluntary groups are affected when employees or those responsible for the finances in voluntary groups steal funds to finance their gambling habit.

I have personal experience of this. Several years ago an acquaintance became increasingly 'friendly'. After a few weeks he borrowed money from me to pay for car repairs; with a promise to repay me on pay day. A few days later he asked for more as the 'car repairs' had turned out to be more expensive than expected. When the borrowed money had not been paid back a few days after the promised date I phoned his home. His partner answered the phone. She told me he was a chronic gambler and she'd kicked him out of the home. Clearly my 'friendly' acquaintance had groomed me before approaching me for the loan. . Silly me, lesson learned the hard way.

In another example, my eldest daughter assumed the duties of treasurer for her national professional body. Upon checking the organisation's accounts, she realised the previous treasurer had been milking the funds. Again, to pay for a gambling habit.

4. I submit that all poker machines should be removed from areas deemed to be lower socio-economic, that any proposal for location of poker machines should be subject to public interest test, and that all such proposals go to public tender. Ideally, we should get rid of these pernicious machines altogether.
5. There will doubtless be complaints from the poker machine industry regarding lost employment and income. However, I understand that poker machines do not provide many jobs in an area and that the percentage of takings to venues is relatively low. The space used by poker machines could well be taken up by alternative attractions, such as live music and cabaret.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'B' followed by a long, sweeping horizontal stroke that curves upwards at the end.

Bob Holderness-Roddam