Julie Thompson

From:	Social Determinants of Health Advocacy Network Rebecca Essex <campaigns@good.do>
Sent:	Thursday, 8 December 2016 4:43 PM
To:	fgm
Subject:	Submission to the Joint Select Committee on Future Gaming Markets

Dear Members of the Committee,

Dear Members of the Committee,

The Social Determinants of Health Advocacy Network (SDoHAN) appreciates the opportunity to respond to the Gambling Inquiry. We know that in order to improve health outcomes for Tasmanians policies that regulate the availability of poker machines through tightened licensing are needed.

Research has shown that the houses we live in, the transport we are able to access, the level of stress in our lives, the job we have or don't have, the social support we have around us and how much money we've got, have as much impact on our health and wellbeing as our genes and behaviours. These factors in our lives are known as the social determinants of health. The social determinants of health are the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work, play and age. They are sometimes referred to as 'the causes of the causes' because they are the underlying reasons why people experience poor health.

Social inequalities are associated with addictive behaviours including gambling. The World Health Organisation states that addiction is both a response to social breakdown and a crucial factor in worsening inequities . For the Tasmanians who lose more than $200 million on poker machines every year, the majority will be people living in disadvantage. The 2008-2012 Victorian Gambling Study found links between substance abuse, mental health issues, high levels of psychological distress, anxiety and depression and high level gambling . We also know that poker machine addiction causes mental and physical health problems, relationship and family breakdown, loss of jobs, crimes, homelessness and poverty.

South Australian work has shown that more frequent gambling amongst adolescents is associated with parental and peer gambling and pro-gambling attitudes . Building a culture in Tasmania that promotes and normalises gambling increases the risk of younger people being drawn into addiction and a path to downward social mobility and for some intergenerational poverty.

Michael Marmot in his 2016 Boyer Lectures reminded us that financial disadvantage does shorten life expectancy and result in higher rates of chronic diseases later in life. So those losing money to poker machine are at risk of ill health.

For the health of Tasmanians we join the call and ask that the Tasmanian Government:

• Get poker machines out of Tasmania's pubs and clubs. • Not increase poker machine numbers in the casinos, and make them safe and fair. • Continue counselling and other support services for those harmed by poker machines. • Support pubs and clubs with poker machines to transition their business model.

By withdrawing poker machines from our pubs and clubs, you can show that your government will not use the misery and addiction of Tasmanians as a source of revenue and will shift our communities' culture away from pro-gambling thus improving the health of Tasmanians.

Yours sincerely, Rebecca Essex, Co-Convenor Social Determinants of Health Advocacy Network