



LISA SINGH
LABOR SENATOR FOR TASMANIA



The Right Reverend John D Harrower OAM
Bishop of Tasmania
GPO Box 748
HOBART TAS 7001

Dear Bishop Harrower,

Thank you for your letter regarding gambling and for showing your support to the efforts of the Australian Government to reduce the impact of gambling on our community.

I understand that gambling addiction ruins lives. Problem gamblers are six times more likely to be divorced and four times more likely to have problems with alcohol. Problem gamblers often suffer mental and physical health problems, can find it difficult to hold down jobs and can find themselves in significant debt.

Problem gambling doesn't discriminate – it affects people from all walks of life and in a wide range of circumstances. As you highlighted in your letter – roughly \$12 billion is spent annually on playing the pokies, with around 40 per cent of this being spent by problem gamblers.

The Government is proposing the use of pre-commitment technology that would operate in pubs and clubs across the country. This would give people a tool to control how much they want to spend – before they sit down at the machine.

While it won't solve the problem, it will help some people stay in control of their addiction.

I would also like to acknowledge your call for political parties to refuse donations from organisations which profit from gambling and will be discussing this matter with my Parliamentary colleagues in coming weeks.

Yours sincerely,

Lisa Singh
Labor Senator for Tasmania