



Senator the Hon Richard Colbeck

Liberal Senator for Tasmania



RC/lr

8 August 2011

The Right Reverend John D Harrower OAM
Bishop of Tasmania
GPO Box 748
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Dear Reverend Harrower,

Thank you for your letter of 26 July in regards to the Tasmanian Anglican community's position on gambling and endorsement of Independent MP Mr Andrew Wilkie's proposed reforms for mandatory pre-commitment system for poker machines.

I am mindful of the need to carefully consider issues associated with problem gambling. Any gambling reform must be measured and fully consider any potential impacts on the community.

It remains unclear how a mandatory pre-commitment system could be implemented and managed across venues and states that currently use different and incompatible computer and network systems. There are also a number of unanswered questions on who will own, have access to and administer people's private information.

Further research is needed to understand the effect of mandatory pre-commitment on employment, tourism and contributions to the community.

The Coalition supports voluntary pre-commitment programs and would like to see these extended to all gaming venues to help problem gamblers. Fundamentally, problem gambling can only be tackled by providing problem gamblers with counselling and support services. The Coalition will look at approaches that provide additional, better equipped and more effective counselling and support services for problem gamblers.

Again, thank you for taking the time to contact me regarding this important matter.

Yours Sincerely

Richard Colbeck

Liberal Senator for Tasmania

Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

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