



Office of the Hon. Tony Abbott MHR
Leader of the Opposition

Bishop John Harrower OAM
Bishop of Tasmania
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16 AUG 2011

Dear Bishop Harrower

Thank you for your insightful letter regarding the issue of problem gambling. I apologise for the delay in responding.

The Coalition certainly acknowledges that gambling can be a problem for some people. However, we are not convinced that the recommendations of the Wilkie Report into gambling reform effectively address or prevent the underlying issue of problem gambling. This is why we have called on the Government to undertake a cost-benefit analysis of the proposed "mandatory pre-commitment scheme" before any decision is made on its implementation.

The Coalition supports taking a measured response that doesn't just look at poker machines, but addresses the broader issue of problem gambling. Any response to problem gambling must also recognise that many Australians gamble responsibly.

The Coalition will look at approaches that provide additional, better equipped and more effective counselling and support services to problem gamblers. We will not rush through ill-conceived policies that will impose additional costs on business without addressing the root causes of the problem.

Thank you again for taking the time to write to us on this important matter.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Murray Cranston'.

MURRAY CRANSTON
Senior Advisor