

# **SUBMISSION**

## **JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON GAMBLING REFORM “PRE-COMMITMENT SCHEME”**

### **CONCLUSION:**

A bad tax is one that is difficult and costly to collect, impacts on a few, is commercially damaging, is difficult to enforce and the revenue collected is relatively small.

Pre-Commitment will be difficult and costly to implement, commercially damaging, difficult to enforce and will not save a single problem gambler. This is well known to Wilkie and Xenophon and they are using the enquiry as a ruse to get rid of poker machines entirely. Problem gambling and gamblers are merely a conduit to their ultimate goals.

### **OBSERVATIONS (Pre-Commitment (hereinafter referred to as P-C))**

P-C is a simplistic concept riddled with unintended consequences? I propose to list some of them in a random way:

- a) P-C will encourage problem gambling not discourage it.
- b) P-C defies all the laws or privacy.
- c) A poker machine player may be compelled to make his/her commitment to a particular machine whereas currently one might “test out” which of six machines is on a paying circle before making a serious investment.
- d) P-C can be easily evaded by the problem gambler by using others as agents.

- e) A P-C investment is likely to be doubled by the problem gambler. The social non-problem gambler does not require P-C.
- f) P-C will lead to diminution of income for the following:
  - i) Governments;
  - ii) Charities;
  - iii) Sporting Organisations;
  - iv) Employees;
- g) P-C will lead to a significant drop in employment.
- h) It will encourage the major political parties such as Labor and the Liberal/Nationals to reach an agreement to swap preferences as current Independents are manipulating the political process with miniscule electoral support. The Victorian State election is a small example of what can happen.
- i) P-C will lead to the destruction of the Club industry in New South Wales and perhaps in other places.
- j) P-C will put at risk enumerable commercial arrangements that exist in the Club industry in relation to banks, builders, suppliers etc. Company liquidation is an inevitable consequence of P-Cs.
- k) P-C zealots wish to regulate the lives of 96% of people who play poker machines responsibly in favour of 4% who play irresponsibly. In reality adopting the cause of problem gamblers is nothing more than an excuse for abolishing the poker machine industry. These zealots have a social engineering desire to change the social behaviour of people with whom they disagree on the issue of poker machines. Poker machines exist. You have a choice to play them or ignore them. If you ignore them, why take up the cause of problem gamblers? Abolishing poker machines or modifying their playing will not save a single problem gambler. Such a person needs proper treatment. Problem gamblers will move from one form of gambling to another when

denied the opportunity of partaking of any form of gambling. Internet gambling is a gambler's smorgasboard and all forms of gambling are likely to become an internet monopoly. What is the Committee doing about it?

- 1) The people of Australia gave no mandate whatsoever for a joint select committee to be set up to enquire into pre-commitment. It is opportunism at its worst given few Australian people voted for Wilkie and Xenophon.

**J DONNELLAN**

27 January 2011