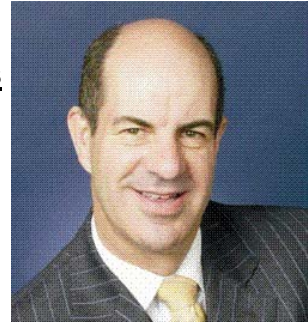


Kelvin Thomson MP
Federal Labor Member for Wills



Monday 24th January 2011/ac

Mr Andrew Wilkie MP
Committee Chairperson
Joint Select Committee on Gambling Reform
PO Box 6100 Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Mr Wilkie,

Submission to the Joint Select Committee's Inquiry on Gambling Reform

Congratulations on the work you have been undertaking to help address problem gambling in Australia. I am writing to make a submission to the Joint Select Committee's Inquiry on Gambling Reform. I understand the Committee is initially focusing its inquiry on the design and implementation of a best practice full pre-commitments scheme that is uniform across all States and Territories and machines. This is consistent with the recommendations and findings of the Productivity Commission's Report into Gambling.

As you are aware, the Australian Government is seeking to implement reforms that will help limit the damaging effects of problem gambling while continuing to allow thousands of Australians enjoy recreational gambling. In 2008 the Government asked the Productivity Commission to conduct a major, independent inquiry into gambling in Australia. The Government's reforms are based on the Productivity Commission's recommendations. I understand the Australian Government is working with state and territory governments, industry and the community sector to implement a full pre-commitment scheme for poker machines as recommended by the Productivity Commission, with implementation of pre commitment arrangements to commence in 2012 and a full scheme commencing in 2014. The Government will seek to support the Productivity Commission's recommendations for poker machine dynamic warning and cost of play displays to provide more information to players, and to implement a \$250 daily withdrawal limit from ATMs in venues with poker machines (except for casinos).

I am writing to advise the Committee of the work being undertaken by Responsible Gaming Networks (RGN) and their Chief Executive Officer, Mr Phillip Ryan. My office attended their Responsible Gaming briefing on 17/12/10. I believe the pre-commitment technology they have designed, developed and produced locally in Victoria, should be considered by the Committee. RGN's pre-commitment technology is designed to help people make informed decisions to better manage their money when playing poker machines, and has the potential to be extended to cover other forms of gambling.

The Player Protection Key which they have developed allows players to pre-set their gambling limit. It also contains measures which help reduce instances of 'key-swapping', behaviour which is common with existing Casino and Club Membership cards, and therefore could help reduce problem gambling. RGN have advised my office that there are a number of studies and examples on this form of pre-commitment technology which show it has a positive effect on reducing problem gambling and reducing player losses.

I would greatly appreciate your taking this information into consideration. I have enclosed a copy of RGN's Safety Net Paper for your information.

Yours sincerely

KELVIN THOMSON MP
Federal Member for Wills

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