



CLUBS FOR PEOPLE

Not For Pokies

The Greens will put people before pokies and reduce gambling harm

Putting the community first means standing up to the gambling lobby and those who profit from pokies and demanding that they take harm minimisation seriously.

Putting the community first means standing up to the gambling lobby and those who profit from pokies and demanding that they take harm minimisation seriously if they want to be a part of our community. The Greens believe that a business model that relies on revenue from problem gambling is a broken business model - and we want to support clubs and our community to move away from pokies machines and start taking problem gambling seriously.

Pokie machines are designed to be highly addictive and distort a player's perception of winning. In the ACT the gambling industry has long fought a long battle against effective harm minimisation. The ACT currently has more pokies per capita than any other state or territory, and the suffering they cause through problem gambling, to families and our community is real. The time has come for the ACT to take gambling harm seriously and to introduce effective measures to minimise gambling harm in our community.

> **Introduce \$1 maximum bets and mandatory pre-commitment on all EGMs**

Pokies are addictive and manipulative and can do huge damage to individuals, families and our community.

While counselling and support is often a crucial part of addressing addiction, no amount of post-crisis counselling is going to be as effective as reducing the amount of money someone can pump through a machine. That's why the ACT Greens will work with the clubs industry to:

» Introduce \$1 maximum bets, \$120 per hour maximum losses and mandatory pre-commitment technology in the next term of the Assembly.

Introducing mandatory precommitment allows people to decide how much they are willing to lose before pushing that first button. The Productivity Commission advises that these measures are the most effective way to tackle problem gambling without unduly impacting on recreational gamblers.

> **Decrease the total number of pokies by 30% over 10 years**

Pokies are addictive and manipulative and can do huge damage to individuals, families and our community.

The ACT currently has the highest rate of pokies per capita of any Australian State or Territory at 16.5 EGMS per 1000 adults.

While some of these machines are in storage, the ACT Greens believe that taking harm minimisation seriously means reducing the total number of pokies machines that could be used both now and in the future.

The ACT Greens will:

- » Lower the number of EGMs from 16.5 EGMs per 1000 adults to 10 EGMs per 1000 adults over 10 years, to bring us in line with the national average.

> Complimentary harm minimisation

Harm minimisation is most effective when delivered in a complementary suite of measures that reach gamblers at multiple times and locations. This is why the ACT Greens will introduce a package of harm minimisation measures with a focus on:

- » Limits on ATM and Eftpos withdrawals at all gambling venues,
- » Restrictions on how jackpots are paid,
- » Increased funding for education, research and counselling,
- » Increased signage in venues, and
- » Restrictions on loyalty programs.

A strong public health approach to harm minimisation requires a combination of different measures to deliver an effective response to a dangerous problem that overwhelmingly impacts the most vulnerable in our community.

> Increase the rate of mandatory community contributions and the Problem Gambling Assistance Fund levy

ACT Clubs are currently required to make community contributions at a minimum rate of 8% of Net Gaming Machine Revenue.

This amounted to \$11 Million last year. 64% of this money went towards sports and recreation. The ACT Greens believe that clubs have a social responsibility to contribute to the broader community, particularly if they are relying on revenue that causes social, financial and health-related harms to Canberrans who struggle with problem gambling.

That's why the ACT Greens will:

- » Increase the minimum rate of community contributions from 8% to 10% and direct the extra 2% into a central fund managed by an independent government appointed board for disbursement. Community groups will be able to apply to the fund for grants, delivering an extra \$1.88 million to community programs.

- » Increase the Problem Gambling Assistance Fund (PGAF) Levy from 0.6% to 1% of the Gross Gaming Machine Revenue and direct the additional revenue into a problem gambling taskforce as recommended by the ANU Centre for Gambling Research during the PAC inquiry.

Increasing the PGAF levy will deliver around \$650,000 of additional revenue to help combat gambling harm through targeted research and service delivery.

> Ban gambling donations to political parties

It's time to make sure our politicians are listening to the community and not the gaming lobby. This year the Clubs industry has taken the radical step of funding a front party to protect their gambling monopoly. The Greens will always put people before pokies - in the Assembly and in the community. That means keeping profits from destructive poker machines out of political parties and out of our democratic processes.

The Canberra Liberals have been channelling political donations from NSW through more lenient ACT laws. The Canberra Labor Club made \$25 million from its poker machines last year and has channeled millions of dollars to an obscure associated entity, the 1973 Foundation, which invests in property and donates to the Labor Party's ACT branch.

It is no longer acceptable for the ACT Labor party to bankroll their campaigns with money extracted from some of our community's most vulnerable members.

A TRANSITION PACKAGE FOR CLUBS

The ACT Greens recognise the role that clubs play in our community, but believe that the social license to profit from pokie machines has expired. That is why we will assist clubs to reduce their reliance on poker machines with the following measures.

> Reward harm minimisation measures with tax rebates for leading clubs

The ACT Greens believe that harm minimisation should be incentivised as part of a raft of measures to encourage clubs to reduce harm and diversify their revenue base.

The ACT Greens will:

- » Investigate differential tax rates for clubs that have better problem gambling measures in place; and
- » Investigate a grant-based scheme to assist smaller clubs with fewer financial resources to implement harm minimisation measures who will then be able to access a lower taxation rate (and continue to diversify their revenue sources).

> Water for community clubs

The Greens recognise the important role that many clubs play in supporting community sports. Given the role of clubs as places of community gathering, recreation and enjoyment. To reduce the financial burden on clubs, the ACT Greens will subsidise water use for community purposes.

The ACT Greens will:

- » Investigate an extension to the community Water Abstraction Charge subsidy for clubs who have a substantial community sporting use of their ovals and greens.

> Review liquor licensing laws

The ACT Greens support the risk-based liquor licensing fee regime in the ACT. However, we recognise that clubs have asserted they have lower risk of alcohol-related harms than is reflected in the regime, which assesses risk based on factors such as trading hours and venue capacity.

Therefore, the ACT Greens will:

- » Conduct a review of the liquor licensing fee regime to ensure clubs and other licensed venues are paying fees that genuinely reflect their risk of alcohol-related harms considering factors such as compliance history, best practice management and number of violent incidents.

> Ensure a level playing field

The ACT Greens have already announced that we will not support the Canberra Casino having poker machines unless they implement the Productivity Commission's recommendations for mandatory pre-commitment and \$1 bet limits per spins. In addition, other regulatory measures should address the Clubs and the Casino in equivalent ways.

> Establish a red tape reduction team

The ACT Greens value the role that clubs play in our community as social and sporting hubs. We want to make it easier for clubs to do business without relying on poker machine revenue.

The ACT Greens will:

- » Establish a red tape reduction team, in partnership with clubs, to work on a series of reforms to make it easier for clubs to do business; and
- » Consult with the Community Clubs Taskforce and with the Canberra Business Council to support a business diversification case manager for clubs to provide advice and assistance as they diversify their business.