



# Media Release

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## Parties must support \$1 bet limit

TasCOSS today called on both major political parties to support the Greens 'Gaming Control Amendment Bill 2010', to impose a \$1 bet limit on poker machines in Tasmania.

"We commend that Tasmanian Liberals on the policy commitments that they took to the 2010 State Election. The Tasmanian Liberals have taken a consistently strong line on gaming culminating in their election commitment to introduce a \$1 bet limit on poker machines. This is an opportunity for the Greens and Liberals to come together to achieve a truly progressive outcome for Tasmania."

"This is an opportunity for Labor to re-think its reluctance on this issue and show leadership in tackling a problem that research consistently shows is causing misery for many Tasmanian families."

"Figures from the Productivity Commission's Draft Report on Gambling indicate that 75 to 80 per cent of all problem gamblers use poker machines ." said Martin Gibson, Acting CEO of TasCOSS.

There are more than 2,500 people with a gambling problem in Tasmania and problem gambling is known to result in increased anxiety and depression, family breakdown, lower workplace productivity and criminal activity. The social and economic cost of problem gambling is multiplied far beyond that which is actually spent on gaming. For every problem gambler, another 5 to 10 people are affected."

Mr Gibson cast doubt on the claims of Federal Hotels that this measure will cost the industry and Government millions without making an impact on problem gambling. Mr Gibson said that "both the Productivity Commission and the Social and Economic Impact Study into Gambling in Tasmania found that that the economic costs of problem gambling to society could easily balance out the economic benefits."

"This is a well balanced policy initiative that significantly reduces the damage caused by problem gambling without limiting access for recreational gamblers".

"90% of Tasmanians support tighter regulation on poker machines . This is a chance for both major parties to show they are responding to what Tasmanians really want."

**Martin Gibson, Acting TasCOSS CEO is available for interview, ph 0409 214 781**