



AUSTRALIAN SENATE

COMMUNITY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

PARLIAMENT HOUSE
CANBERRA ACT 2600
Tel: (02) 6277 3515
Fax: (02) 6277 5829

Email: community.affairs.sen@aph.gov.au

Poker Machine Harm Reduction Tax (Administration) Bill 2008

On 12 March 2008 the Senate, on the recommendation of the Selection of Bills Committee, referred the Poker Machine Harm Reduction Tax (Administration) Bill 2008 to the Community Affairs Committee. The reporting date is 12 August 2008.

Note: The inquiry into this Bill has now been combined with the inquiry into Poker Machine Harm Minimisation Bill 2008, and the reporting date has been extended to 10 November 2008.

Reasons provided for referral of the Bill and the principal issues for consideration are:

Poker machines are a major community concern for Australia today. Family First's *Poker Machine Harm Reduction Tax (Administration) Bill 2008* would introduce a new federal tax on poker machines in pubs and clubs to push pokies out of these community venues and restrict them to casinos and racetracks, which are dedicated gambling venues.

Poker machines are no good for families:

- About 293,000 people have a significant gambling problem in Australia and about 85% of problem gamblers use poker machines;
- About 52% of problem gamblers said they had borrowed money and not paid it back, 36% said they had sold property to raise money to bet and 43% said they sometimes went without food to pay for their addiction. One in four suffered divorce or separation and one in 10 had seriously contemplated suicide;
- On average around seven other people are affected by a severe problem gambler's behaviour. That's around 2 million Australians;
- More than 50% of regular poker machine users are problem gamblers or at risk of becoming problem gamblers.

The Bill and second reading speech may be accessed via the link: [Legislation and documentation to the Bill](#)

The Committee invites you to provide a written submission addressing issues that may be of relevance to you. The submission should be lodged by 13 June 2008. The Committee prefers to receive submissions electronically as an attached document – email: community.affairs.sen@aph.gov.au – otherwise by fax (02 6277 5829).

Submissions become Committee documents and are made public only after a decision by the Committee. Publication of submissions includes loading them onto the internet and their being available to other interested parties including the media. Persons making submissions must not release them without the approval of the Committee. Submissions are covered by parliamentary privilege but the unauthorised release of them is not protected.

Information relating to Senate Committee inquiries, including notes to assist in the preparation of submissions for a Committee, can be located on the Internet at http://www.aph.gov.au/senate/committee/wit_sub/index.htm

Should you require further information please contact the Committee Secretariat on (02) 6277 3515.